The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

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Nels F. S. Ferré

Thou Art the Christ

John R. Bodo	•	Meaning of the Ascension
Charles C. Knapp	•	High Fidelity
Lawrence L. Gruman	•	Father, Son, Holy Spirit
Kenneth M. Glazier	•	Alike to All
George E. Fox	•	Baccalaureate Sermon
Gary Bousman	•	New Roads to Travel

R. C. DELAMOTTE • WHY CAN'T OUR EGGHEADS PREACH?

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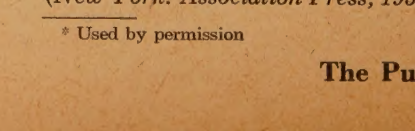
Nota Bene



A LITTLE girl once prayed, 'O God, please make all the bad people better. And O God, please make all the good people nicer.' Don't we all wonder sometimes whether good people are the best company? Are they not apt to be insipid or strained? There are some, thank God, who show clearly what Paul meant by 'life and peace.' But the idea of good people in general is colorless and chilly. Sometimes we feel that their motive is wrong, that they want to be good so as to boast about it, or so as to win the favour of God or man. Or perhaps they use the wrong methods, trying to discipline and improve themselves in the hope that some day they will be able to say 'I am good now,' and then to relax. They may be thinking human thoughts instead of the thoughts of God. However that may be, are we quite sure that being good is altogether desirable?—*J. R. Macphail,* The Bl Cloud *(New York: Oxford Unive Press, 1956)**

THE best Christian thought never been willing to exclude area of life from the formulation theology. Augustine, Aquinas, Lu and Calvin all related the demand the Christian faith to both the th and practice of politics. If what have to say on these subjects seem mote from what we know as politic day, this reflects the changes in political process even more than change in the relevance of theolog *William Muehl,* Politics for Christ *(New York: Association Press, 195*

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The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

VOLUME XXVIII JUNE 1957 No. 6

Memo:

IF the authors of the sermons in any issue of The Pulpit could ever sit down together to discuss the theological bases and contexts of their pieces, our ought to fly; because editors, though they have their theological convictions and their homiletical preferences, try hard not to straight-jacket the magazine. So there is variety—the kind of variety which, if taken seriously, ought to start arguments. Yes, *ought* to: Protestant Christianity is argumentive not accidentally or coincidentally, but fundamentally. Debate is of our essence. It is precisely by the free discussion, the vigorous discussion of our differences that we stay on the stumbling way, the only way to truth.

We differ in love, of course, but differ we do if we are honest with ourselves and with each other and serious about getting farther than any of us are. Love in this context is the affirmation of every man's right to vigorous dissent, even to dissent from our most cherished centralities. Love which turns itself off when the other moves toward blasphemy is not love but a wolfish self-affirmation that turns the gospel affection into a grandmother's bonnet. Love which insists that debate be carried on all Alphonse-Gaston, sotto voce, is not love but a mealy mouth.

Where did anybody ever get the ridiculous idea that if you are truly loving you won't ever have a bone to pick with anyone? That is equivalent to saying that if you live in love you won't ever give the truth another thought. Taking issue, criticizing, contradicting, remonstrating—these are born of concern for the truth. By your objections to another's truth you do not suggest that you have *the* truth, you only begin the comparing and contrasting which may finally bring you both closer to the real thing. If you love the truth as well as your fellows you *must* dispute with them every point where truth is at issue. That is how you pursue truth, which pursuit is one of our devotions to the God of all truth.

But of all the variations in viewpoint which ought to have made our pages restless in the past, few can have been so pointedly dissimilar as those printed in the front and in the back of this issue. The sermons in between may ameliorate the tension but reading the articles by DeLamotte and Stroup together suggests that these men are not exactly eye to eye in their homiletical vision.

DeLamotte, I take it, is pleading for a little more of what friend Ed Dowey calls the apparently necessary "corn in Christianity." With great pastoral compassion and with a literary flair that makes the rest of us want to hang up our pencils on the wall and then kick a disconsolate stone all the way home, DeLamotte pleads for bite-size ideas served with familiar cream, the most usual sugar and a favorite fruit. Eager to get our preaching through to the pew, he would have us break down doctrine into its simplest components and then to serve them one Sunday at a time. He would have us press out all the permanent pleats in our theology, that there be no crease or wrinkle to unseat lightly poised attentions. And he of the fresh phrase would apparently have us couch our address in the homely and the dearly familiar.

Stroup, on the other hand, arraigns us for being too consistently homely and dearly familiar. His remonstrances on the calibre of pulpit poetry will be recognized as well taken by all who prepare sermons not just as communications to the pew but as creations, with their own integrity, offered by the preacher to the God of truth and beauty to whom all sermons point. We certainly have used too much junk in our sermons and let too much beauty go by either because we didn't know where to find it, or because we didn't think our hearers were up to it.

As a man in the middle may I venture that both our authors are right, and that it wouldn't take much to make both of them wrong? DeLamotte cannot be challenged in his insistence that we find and use the verbal and emotive avenues that will best bear our traffic to its intended end. Well-used thoroughfares are swift and sure; they should not be rejected just because they are popular. But it is a perilously small downhill slide from embracing the vernacular to being engulfed by the vulgar.

On the other hand, few who know the possibilities will doubt that relative sophistication in pulpit material can and does make sermons that sparkle in flight and that stick to the mark. There are congregations that anticipate a stretching, an extension, an illumination—the unfamiliar note sounded the unexpected way, the way the new poets can sound it. The peril of course is superciliousness. Better to leave the stuff alone than to cultivate it for the wrong reason. Christians are culture-vultures. Gratefully they use all the resources of their culture, old and new, foreign and familiar, in the service of their God.

H. A. G.

The Diseases of Education
And How to Treat Them

WHY CAN'T OU

THE old cry, "Why can't our young men preach?" has been bouncing off bewildered bishops down through the ages. A partial answer for some of our more "respectable" denominations may be found in the psychological by-products of higher education. These by-products are much more damaging homiletically than the mere loss of dogmatic certainties like the Virgin Birth or the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch.

The process of college and seminary training infects its victims with at least three deadly diseases, any one of which can disqualify a man for effective communication with ordinary folk in the average pastoral appointment.

Paralysis Sets In

The first of these infections is characterized by an enlargement of the imagination followed by stupefaction of the volition. This disease afflicts a few college freshmen, spreads rapidly among sophomores and reaches epidemic proportions among juniors and seniors. The bigness of the world, the limits of the possible, the gigantic determining forces of history, the feebleness and incompleteness of individual effort—all are by-products of the mind's discovering more than the will can assimilate.

The Bilbos and Huey Longs and Hitlers move their millions while the intellectuals look on in envious despair at such "demonic" powers of communication. Spiritual eggheads compare sociological analyses of Billy Graham and Oral Roberts, and direct twenty-minute essays in exasperation at their near-empty churches concerning the tent-meeting evangelist down the street who packs 'em in for weeks, rain or shine, and holds 'em spell-bound on hard-backed benches for an hour and a half at a stretch. The man who can move and shake history, it would almost appear, is just about anybody who is too ignorant to know it can't be done.

It is no accident that politically the least effective minds in many communities are the best-educated, nor is it mere chance that the most inept preachers are often the Ph.D.'s. The very intellectual buffeting which tempers the mind and broadens the agination frequently numbs the nerve and shatt the first premise of all effective prophecy—that through man *can* change the course of history.

Mental Strangulation

The second disease of the educated is a sev complication of the cerebellum, accompanied malignant, web-like growths that relate everyth to everything else and strangle all simplicity.

Nobody is more suspect on a college faculty t the colleague who writes a best-seller. This is mere jealousy of his eloquence, money, or fame is the dark certainty that he has over-simpli very complicated truths, that the point so nea made in the closing chapter needed an additio chapter of qualifications, and that this best-sel Judas has done his work in a conscious, c blooded plot to murder the complexity of actual

Ministers similarly entertain dark suspicions any cleric suspected of knowing more complica things than he is preaching in any individual mon. We suspect him of selling out the paradox and enormously complicated nature of truth for sake of getting a few hundred intellectual midg into heaven. The egghead will reluctantly watch own flock agonize in every conceivable hell of xiety, doubt, and fear just as long as he can ma into heaven triumphant, bearing the whole tr unfractured and unbetrayed. Whatever his sins has never over-simplified a complex issue or fa to fling over gladiators battling for truth in his li parish a paralyzing network of honest secc thoughts.

The Crowd Trauma

The third disease of the well-educated is thr bosis of the heartstrings with coldness of handshake and frequent malfunctioning of the s pathetic nervous system. The victim becomes pressed in crowds, prefers hobnobbing with a se minority, and must take frequent rest-cures lis ing to Bach with a recent *New Yorker* shielding eyes from the painful glare of a world full of p pigs, newborn babies, jokes about false teeth, ragtime gospel tunes.

This last disease is uniformly fatal to commun tion with the ordinary man. People flocked ou vote for Adlai Stevenson after his first camp

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By Roy C. DeLamotte

EGGHEADS PREACH?

ot because they understood his words but because is respect and affection for them came shining rough his ideas with the radiance of young love. n his tragic second campaign the professional poli- cians apparently persuaded him against all his wn profoundest instincts to look down on ordinary tizens and to speak to them as illiterate children capable of anything higher than greed or self- terest. This time they understood his words, but e did not communicate in the meaningful way he ad in 1952 when the millions who make history ere profoundly moved and shaken by the warmth f this man's transparent love. Though he spoke ith the tongues of men and of angels in 1956, it rofited him nothing, and herein lies a parable for reachers.

When the cultural milieu of my professional edu- ation makes me no longer able to enjoy the books man reads, the pictures he hangs on his kitchen all, the jokes he laughs at, the music he listens to, nd the methods by which his mind approaches uth, I may well end my training with a dehy- rated love for a disembodied spirit. For everyday reaching purposes, this is no love at all. Seminary aining produces here its most insidious by- roduct, and one of its most baffling and insoluble roblems in the relation of the pastor to his flock.

The Disease Treated

The following treatment is urgently recom- ended for the abovementioned afflictions of re- gious egg-headery:

1. We must recapture the centrality of the aver- ge man in our thinking about the church. Inability communicate with him is not just a passing convenience which we can comfortably forget in e sophisticated sanctuary of First Church in burbia. He *is* humanity itself—ninety-nine per nt of it all around the globe! To be unable to uch him for Christ is to be unable to touch man- nd. He is not our occupational disease of boredom nd frustration. He is not a series of career step- ngstones across which we take frantic flight from s own humor, his simplicity, his music, his reading atter, and his uncriticized absolutes. In most of e churches in which most of us will serve most of ur lives, he is the membership, the fellowship, the otential communion of the saints, and our only ason for existence as men called of God to preach.

2. We must learn the excitement, joy, and chal- lenge of bringing the limited ordinary man into contact with the unlimited wealth of religious his- tory, learning, and tradition which we have ac- quired in our specialized education. The way out is not to abandon higher education, but rather to confess and to inventory its subtle dangers and limitations as a preparation for the ministry.

To recognize that the average man does not know where Suez is, cannot pronounce it when he sees it in print, and is firmly convinced that "We sure took care of that business pronto!" is to recognize the depth and challenge of our problem. The in- vincibility of the average man's misinformation and dogmatism is half the reward of success! To put over a new idea at a faculty tea is a pleasant pas- time, but to put over the same idea in a rural church with an average congregation of thirty is one of the most challenging, exciting and utterly absorbing jobs on earth!

Art of the Possible

3. We must learn to enjoy in preaching what is called in politics "the art of the possible." This in- volves a painful renuciation—the giving up of whole truth. In realistic deference to the dogmatic simpli- city of average minds, we must content ourselves with a tenth or a hundredth of the complicated truth we know. We must master the art of preach- ing one tiny facet of the many-sided gem of truth with the vehemence and abandon of an absolute. And we must discover the thrill of having perfectly average hearts respond to well-directed gleams from the incomparable radiance of Christ with a radiance of their own that often makes the preacher's heart seem cheap and flawed.

4. When we have selected our single facet of truth, we must cash in on (not outrage!) the values dear to ordinary humanity, whatever our own pre- dilections in music, art, or humor. We may discover that some of our customers will never buy our big idea unless we gift-wrap it for them, tie a pair of baby shoes on top, and stick a rosebud through the laces. This some of us have learned to bring off with love and with joy in our delight at escaping the solitary confinement of the pulpit. Others, fresh out of seminary, or just plain born with a long-play- ing record in their mouths, cannot so basely betray

(Continued on page 10)

Thou Art the Christ

By Nels F. S. Ferré

Mark 8:29.

WITH our present return to serious theology the question who Christ is may be the most vexing and critical problem of today. There are two basic ways of looking at Christ. They involve basic differences as to our understanding of the character of God, the person and work of Christ and the nature of man himself. This sermon aims at clarifying the heart of the gospel.

Self-Sufficient Being

According to one view (that is not my own), God is self-sufficient Being. It follows from this point of view that God did not need to create, that God is not by *nature* Creator. Whatever else can be meant by the Trinity, the doctrine, within the context of God as self-sufficient Being, affirms that God does not need to create community. Such a being cannot be known by us as he is in himself, but only as he has declared himself to be in the Bible, in Christ, and perhaps in the church and its traditions. Speculative thinking about God, this view holds, is always antifactual. How he is, he has disclosed sufficiently for our salvation. To reason from such revelation in order to obtain more information is to miss the truth, since it is impossible to go from the category of man to the category of God.

It follows also from the fact that God is self-sufficient Being that God did not need to come down to redeem man. Man's fall, it is claimed, is not God's fault. It is due either to man's deliberate disobedience that forfeited his status as a child of God or to God's eternal will to create some vessels to honor and some to dishonor. In either case man has no right to judge God. God alone is judge and the sovereign determiner of destiny. Luther writes that God did not need to come and be made man, but rather was it needful and profitable for us. Calvin's view of God, in this respect, has been fairly compared to grace for som beyond justice, in the case of Negro prisoners a southern state. All guilty, they were allowed pass in review before the wife of the governo According to an established custom she wou pick some for pardon who could thereupon ser in the governor's mansion for a year before bei set free. Similarly, all men are guilty before Go The fact that some are saved by his mercy cann be held against God's justice, but only contribut to the praise of his mercy.

It follows further from this first point of vie that God did not only not need to come to man order to save him but neither does he need ever fulfill human history. God did not need to crea in the first place. God is not *by nature* Creato Nor did God need to enter world history to sa man. God is not *by nature* redeemer. But neith does he need to fulfill human lives or history any final time. God is not *by nature* the fulfill of history. God is self-sufficient Being who w never be bothered by the eternal death or sufferi of the creatures. That is simply not his affair.

He will finish human history, says this view, his way, the way of the sovereign will. His business to uphold perfect righteousness. He is inviolab holy. The fact that the Bible, for the most pa tells us that only a part of the world will be sav illustrates the perfect, nonsentimental justice God whose ways are not man's ways and who weaknesses are not man's.

Self-Sufficient Love

According to the second main view of Chr —the view to which I subscribe—God is n self-sufficient Being, but self-sufficient Love. creating, God performed no arbitrary act. never remained in bliss through half eternity, so we may speak, and then decided in the mid of eternity to express his bliss by the doing of t one new thing for him, creating. Creating *is part* the nature of God. It is a way in which he who Love expresses himself. God creates precisely b cause he is outgoing creative Love. God needs create, not as a lack of being, but as the perfecti of love. God needs to create as a true mother nee to love her child. Such need is no failure but t authentic revelation of motherhood. The nature infinite love is to create the finite, to redeem freedom and to perfect it. The Trinity, in this vie stands necessarily for the fact that God is not se sufficient Being but an outgoing Love who com to create, to save and to fulfill. We know this G because he has revealed himself in the fullness time in Jesus Christ. The Bible tells the story Jesus Christ and the story of all men in the lig of God's presence as literally holy Love, inclusive and unconditionally, in Jesus Christ.

Such a self-sufficient Love, who creates out the perfection of his nature, also redeems man o of his own perfection. To love is to identify ones with the beloved. God came *to* man because loved man. He came *in* man because he respect man. He who is Love knows that love cannot given as a package but only as a person. Ma

NELS F. S. FERRÉ, *professor of philosophical theology at Vanderbilt University's School of Religion, delivered this sermon early this year before the Chicago Sunday Evening Club. Dr. Ferré holds degrees from Boston University, Andover Newton Theological School and Harvard University, and has studied at the universities of Uppsala and Lund in his native Sweden. Author of a dozen books, and member of several learned societies, he has lectured at seminaries throughout the country, and in 1950 received a Carnegie grant for research on "the relation between the historical doctrine of God and contemporary process philosophy."*

freedom must be kept inviolate, letting man find for himself the Love for whom he was made, and accept and mature in this Love. Therefore God himself came to identify himself with us, to enter our plight, to do on our behalf what we could not do our ourselves, namely, to open up acceptance from his own side that we might find the forgiveness of our sins and free fellowship within his Love. Calvary was promised in creation. God's suffering and conquest of sin, of law and of death by his resurrection over all of them were part of his eternal purpose in Christ precisely because he is the God we meet in Christ—the God who is self-sufficient Love.

Such a God who creates and redeems because he is Love also fulfills man's history because he is Love. Because God is Love, creation matters. Because God is Love, God cares eternally and comes to save us. Because God is Love, God seeks the last child more surely than the good shepherd his hundredth sheep. Until the children find heaven and home, God sorrows and longs; he seeks and woos; but at last he seeks and finds. He has made the far country a place where his wayward sons ultimately starve and are in want until they come to themselves and return. Thus loves God, because he is not self-sufficient Being, but self-sufficient Love!

Christ the Lord

There is not only a basic divergence as to the view of God in these two ways of looking at Christ and of following him; there are also basic differences as to God's relation to man in Christ. According to the first, Christ is and works mainly as God in a human body; according to the second Christ is and works mainly as God in a human being. In either case the key is the presence and power of God, but in the former case the key is the presence and power of God acting through a human organism; in the latter case, the key is the presence and power of God acting through a human personality.

In the first view, specifically, Christ became Man, but never *a* man. He took on human nature generally, but never became a human personality specifically. Jesus is eternal, the second Person in the Trinity. He was born of Mary directly by God and grew a body through which to communicate with the world and to work the redemption of man on the cross and to rise from the grave. Therefore Christ, in this view, suffered as God, not as man. Only the infinite can pay the infinite debt, even though he takes human form for the rendering of the payment. Jesus died as God and raised himself as God.

Consequently, in this first view, Jesus was never fallible. He was born perfect by the generation of the Holy Spirit in the Virgin's womb and never lacked the power and reality of perfection. He had to be free from sin through his whole life, from beginning to end, because God cannot sin. He knew all things all the time because he was God and, therefore, again, his every word is literally a word of God infallibly given for our salvation. Jesus never was free to sin, to fall, to fail in any respect because he was God. This is no caricature of the position. *It is its main intention and contention.* Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior, because he is God, and this and this alone is the meat and matter of the gospel.

According to the second main point of view, however, Christ's work is basically performed as man. God acts in and through a genuine human being. The most important fact about him, of course, is not his humanity, however high and however new, but God's presence in him. The gospel of Jesus Christ is summarized in our meeting God in man and in what God did for us through man. Yes, the whole purpose of incarnation is the humanity of Jesus. God sent no external message nor messenger but came as true man, as a real human being. He came thus in order that he might be real and relevant to our lives. He entered our ordinary nature to enable us to become rightly related to God, which is the essence of salvation.

Jesus of Nazareth

Accordingly Jesus suffered as finite man. He suffered as one born and brought up under the law within the conflicts of the flesh. He knew personal problems, for to this end God identified himself with us. Jesus was tempted, suffered and died as a man. With deep discernment Luther has written: "Thus making a happy exchange with us, He took upon Him our sinful person, and gave us His innocent and victorious person, with which we are now clothed and freed from the curse of the law." A favorite hymn of my father's has it that we must exchange hearts with our Savior. Vincent Taylor tells us that Jesus became *our representative*, acting on our behalf or on our account, as one of us!

Jesus had to know and to assume our failures, our mistakes, our limitations and our sins in order to conquer them. Him who knew no sin, the Bible says, God made to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God through him. Long ago Gregory Nazianzen said that what was not assumed was not healed. In Jesus, God as Son assumed our total alienation from him and made a living way for us to himself. God, obviously, cannot sin. Neither can the Son of God sin, as God. The power of the Sinless can alone conquer sin for us. And sin was conquered in Jesus by the victory of his life, the cross and resurrection, but it was conquered because in him sin had come to do its best to tempt and to overthrow the Son of God, but was routed in the struggle and was dragged to the cross to be killed. In this same victorious humanity we may partake by accepting within ourselves the eternal Son of God. The Son of God, God's outgoing Spirit, is the head of humanity; in our humanity we can also find victory as sons of God whenever our sins are nailed to the cross of God's complete self-giving for us and raised with Jesus into newness of life. The point is that God became organically and fulfillingly present in a human being, Jesus, beyond any mere human body, reconciling the world and himself. The nature and purpose of God are thus seen in the person and work of Christ Jesus, the Godman, the first-born from the dead in order that

he might have many brethren.

The two different ways of looking at Christ entail divergent views of man as well. In the perspective that assumes God to be self-sufficient Being, and not self-sufficient Love, man is thought of as basically a guilty sinner. God gave him his freedom. Deliberately he sinned. Thereby he forfeited all right to claims on God. Man's only relation to God now is therefore one of guilt. If man is outside the protecting grace of the work of Christ, he is by nature a lost sinner and *nothing else*. In this view there is no necessary, inner relation between God and man. Man has forfeited his chance to be saved and his destruction or damnation in no way affects the inner life of God. God is only carrying out his will for a rebellious realm to which he is not related by any inner, lasting ties of duty or of love.

In the case where God is conceived of as self-sufficient Love through his being and working in Jesus as the Christ, man, on the contrary, is conceived quite differently as a potential Godman, a potentially new creature in Christ.

From this second point of view Jesus showed us both God and man. Augustine wanted to know two things only: the nature of God and of the soul. In Jesus these two questions are answered. Because God created as Love, man is from the beginning a creature of Love. Man is by origin the child of God as Love. God is Love and man is made in his image by Love for Love. Man's basic relation all the time, furthermore, is his relation to God. The basic thing about man is not that he is a sinner. He *is*. The basic thing is rather that, sinner or no, he stands in relation to a Love who made him and who calls him into fellowship with himself and with all who are made of God.

A New Age in Christ

Potential man, not actual man, is proper man. God's ultimate will for man is more real and true than man's present will for himself. God's freedom to be God and have his way, even in love's freedom, is incomparably more determinative than man's right to rebellion and his actual rebellion, through which he is to find himself and to find God's way to be best. A God-centered and Christ-centered view of man is thus more important and more real than a man-centered view. Man is a sinner. There is no denying the fact. But more significantly, he is made by God, stands in relation to God and is made for God.

As a matter of fact, man is made to have God in him. Even as Jesus, because God was conclusively in him, became the first full man, so we become fully human only as we realize our own true and full potential to be rightly related to God. Jesus was the first Godman in the crucial sense of the word. We are called by God in him to become Godmen, by having God literally in us as our new selves. We are called to have the Word in us, to have Christ in us as the hope of glory, to have the Spirit of Christ in us.

To be a new creature in Christ is not merely to have our original creation restored; far from it! With Christ came a new age. The end of all things which is true beginning came with him. The Kin dom of God came with him. God as Love, in t proper sense, came with him, fulfilling, correctin transforming all else. Incarnation, God in man, no isolated instance in Jesus, but the purpose of creation. God becomes incarnate in you and in m The eternal purpose of God was realized in Chris The Creator became crucified for our sake; and he who is least in the kingdom of the crucified ar risen Son of God is qualitatively greater than th greatest of all prophets of law and justice. Jes humbled himself all the way to the death on th cross, wherefore God gave him the name above a names, the name of sovereign Lord as saving Lov The more Christ lives in us, the less we too becon in ourselves. But when we are thus losing our live we find them, until we all become filled with all th fullness of God. We become members of the body Christ whose fullness fills all in all. The humanit of Jesus is crucially important because it is the doo into our humanity, it is the pledge for our humar ity, it is the victor of God for our humanity. Thu we are joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, sharing in ou lives the same God and the same humanity.

A Whole Christ for a Whole World

All men, furthermore, belong within Christ poten tially, for God is bound to them with cords of lov that can neither break nor wear out. God as eterna Love will not rest satisfied until the children of h Love accept his Love. God sorrows for the lost. H identifies himself with them in suffering and sin. H works to save them. The very nature of the body Christ, the true church, is to be a community continual concern for the world. The fact that Go cannot be satisfied without all his children is n lack in him; it is the perfection of Love, signified b the fact that even if we are faithless God remain faithful, for he cannot deny himself, and sealed b his sacrificial death for us. Thus you and I ar worth beyond all objective descriptions because w are the objects of God's creative and redemptiv concern.

Thus we have given a few hints as to the natur and importance of two divergent views of Chris One starts with God as self-sufficient Being an backs this view with biblical quotations, to th effect that God is not intrinsically nor eternall related to the world in terms of responsible an effective Love. The other view starts with Jesu Christ in terms of the Love that he himself demon strated and taught, arriving at a view of God a self-sufficient Love. The choice between the two critical as to the character of God, the meaning Christ and of human nature and history.

My own deepest conviction is that we cannot ha on both sides. Our ultimate view of God, consciousl and far more unconsciously, determines our cultura patterns, our economic and social life, our raci behavior and our national and international rela tions. The Christian gospel of God's universal lov in Christ comes as our fullest judgment as well a our greatest hope. One or the other is right, God a self-sufficient Being or God as self-sufficient Lov

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A Message from the Presidents of the World Council of Churches

PENTECOST
JUNE 9, 1957

As Presidents of the World Council of Churches we greet our brethren in the member churches.

On this birthday of the Church of Christ we should remind one another that the Church was born when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the apostles, constraining them to proclaim to all around them the mighty works of God. Thus the last promise of the risen Lord was fulfilled:

> *"You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witness in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth."*—ACTS 1:9 (R.S.V.)

To be the Church is to live by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is this power, which we need if we are to find repentance and renewal of life. It is this power which enables the Church to give hope to the hopeless.

The nations are looking with fear to an unknown future. Grave problems of human relationships which cause the suffering of millions of our fellow-men remain unsolved. This is not because the necessary intelligence is lacking, or even some general goodwill. It is rather because men have not the power to do the good that they know they ought to do.

In closing the inconclusive Disarmament Conference held some twenty years ago the Chairman said: "In such a situation as the present nothing can help us but faith . . . The obstacles are not in the world around us, but in our minds and hearts. We will the end, but we do not will it hard enough to risk the means." That is still our position to-day. We long for true international understanding and peace, but we cannot bring ourselves to pay the price. In the churches we find a real desire for renewal, for unity, for evangelism, but not enough readiness to consecrate ouselves so fully to the service of Christ that we become the willing instruments of His saving work. Now Whitsun comes to tell us that the one and only way in which our weakness can be transformed into strength is by receiving the life-giving Spirit which turned disappointed disciples into courageous witnesses.

We therefore beseech you, brethren, so to wait upon God that we may be endued with power from on high. We are often in such a hurry to do things for God that we forget God Himself and do not wait for the Spirit. "Not by might nor by power, but by my spirit" says the Lord of Hosts.

May the fellowship in Christ which we have in the World Council show the nations that there exists a People of God which lives in the strength of the Holy Spirit. May it render clear witness to the ends of the earth, that this Spirit really does enable man to carry out God's gracious plan for His children.

THE PRESIDENTS OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Signed JOHN BAILLIE
SANTE UBERTO BARBIERI
GEORGE CICESTR
OTTO DIBELIUS
JUHANON MAR THOMA
MICHAEL
HENRY KNOX SHERRILL

Geneva, 1957

Eggheads

(Continued from page 5)

their own aesthetic and literary sensibilities and hence must reluctantly remain incommunicado.

Howevermuch we may despise the rabble-rousers and the shockingly effective demagogues, we must learn to use for God the weapons they have used for Satan. Repetition, over-simplification, emotionalization, identification with cherished values—all are weapons straight from the arsenal of Hitler and Goebbels, and all *can* be used for Christ. The serious practitioner of communication does not quote T. S. Eliot to congregations nurtured on Edgar A. Guest. Instead, like Mr. Nixon in his hour of need, he will take a page from the notebook of the anti-Christ upon occasion and will boldly confront the hounds of hell with his own dog Checkers.

5. Lastly, we must re-learn our love for *ordinary* humanity. Perhaps "learn" is a poor word. Love for any other creature outside our own self-interested circle sometimes seems a pure gift of God. But we must realize that the truth Christ brought was not rational truth, not the correspondence of carefully formulated concepts with empirically verifiable data, honestly understated and accompanied by an appendix of duly noted exceptions. The truth Christ brought did not set men free from the shackles of ignorance, prejudice or misinformation. It freed us, as the verses following John 8:32 clearly indicate, from the bondage of sin.

Thus preaching is not actually a battle between truth and falsehood at all in which the "degree man" has a mighty arsenal of facts and figures with which to reduce the forts of folly and to quench all the darts of the illiterate. Rather it is, at its highest, a process of being possessed by a selfless love which cannot bear to remain unexpressed, which *must* declare itself, and which seizes on and transmutes whatever materials lie at hand. It is an experience of the divine love flowing through us which, when all visible channels are closed and shuttered by differences in background, upbringing, education, vocabulary and humor, can still find its way through, can still be felt by the hearer, can still speak clear, familiar words from Christ-won heart to Christ-won heart.

Christ

(Continued from page 8)

Choose we must and do. My own choice is committedly that God has come in Christ as holy, self-sufficient Love, and I believe that we as Christians shall see a day of full power in personal living, in community, in thought and action, in worship and work, only when we repent of our faithlessness and by faith and grace accept, live and proclaim the whole gospel of the whole Christ for a whole world.

A Parable

By Robert E. Chiles

A CERTAIN man was without a job. Therefo it was hard for him to eat regularly and to pa his bills. It embarrassed him around other peop who had jobs; but worst of all, it ruined his sel respect. One day he heard of an opening that woul take care of all his problems: enable him to ea to hold his head up before others and to like himse again. Eagerly he went to apply for the job, bu alas, his training and experience simply did n measure up—he found that he lacked most of th qualifications, but he needed the job so desperatel that he decided to pretend. When he was inte viewed he was vague about his background, yet, h gave the impression that the job was old stuff t him. So convincing was he that he was hired.

Striving to Succeed

Of course he worked very hard at his new job. H watched others at their work in an effort to lear everything that he could. He tried strenuously t appear to be what he was not. But before long h was dismayed to realize that the job was not th sort that could be picked up by persistence alon He knew that it was only a matter of time until h was found out. But he was in the job, there wa no graceful way out, and besides, he needed i There was nothing to do but try, and keep anxiou watch on those around him to see if they had dis covered his secret.

Slowly he began to piece scattered bits togethe Suddenly the truth flashed on him like a great ligh Everyone was in the same boat! The others wer pretending too. They were trying to impress on another that they were, in fact, what they pre tended to be.

Overcome by his newfound knowledge he sa down and laughed and laughed. "Imagine," he said "everyone of us trying to deceive all the rest! An no one is himself. I don't know any of them an none of them really knows me."

The Tragedy of Deception

Then he stopped laughing because suddenly wasn't funny. It was tragic—trying to make li depend on deception. He remembered all the an xious fear of being found out, all the terrible har work trying to discover how to act and what to sa to deceive others.

He knew then how empty it all was, how dul how lacking in life and joy, how cold and stiflin He mourned the unborn goodness of the past an for the bleak uncertainty of the future.

The name of the plant was CONTEMPORAR CHURCH, and each job bore the same title: RIGHT EOUS RESPECTABILITY.

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hrist's Ascension Illuminates
lis Resurrection

The Meaning of the Ascension

By John R. Bodo

Acts 1:1-14

A MAN once said to me, "I'd give anything to be able to forget what my brother's last illness id to him and to remember him only as he used to e—the picture of life itself." We can all match this ish. We all have some painful memory of the face f a loved one marred by sickness and death. Our ith helps us to conquer our grief but cannot altoether dispel the memory.

The picture of Jesus on the cross left an image ith his friends which even the glory of his resurction could not dislodge. Of course, they were not eant to forget his suffering and death. The resurction did not make sense apart from the agony nd the finality of the crucifixion. But, as a crownng act of his mercy, God granted them a vision to lace alongside the memory of the crucified—a last iew of the risen Savior slowly and majestically scending toward his throne of glory in the heavens.

But the account of the ascension poses all sorts f problems. To believe it literally implies an acceptnce of the pre-Copernican universe, a cosmic sandich in which our earthly life lies imbedded between slice of heaven and a slice of hell. But the meaning f the event is more important than its exact cirumstances. Coming between Easter and Pentecost, ne ascension of Jesus suggests a wealth of truth nseparable from the rest of the gospel. In fact, the scension completes the meaning of all the major vents of the story of our redemption.

Ascension and Resurrection

For one thing, the ascension completes the meang of the resurrection. After the supreme miracle Christ's conquest of death and his many appearnces to the disciples, it was still necessary that at me point his physical presence should be withrawn from earth. When our time comes, we must l disappear from earthly view to resume our life ith God. But the final disappearance of Jesus had be different because he was different. Throughout his life his friends sensed in him that divinity which his humanity could only shelter but not conceal. The theological formula, "fully God and fully man," took centuries of wrangling and toil to devise, but the firsthand experience was there—in all its bafflement and all its beauty—in the hearts and memories of the Twelve.

When our time comes, our bodies are laid to rest in the dust of the earth while our spirits pass into God's presence. The body of Jesus was also laid to rest in this fashion, with all the dignity and tender care which sorrow and remorse could muster. But then came Easter. The disciples were permitted to see their Lord alive once more—completely alive and fully recognizable but also different . . . unearthly . . . transfigured. Even in the midst of their joy, which was so great that they nearly lost their senses, it was clear to them that this was an extraordinary demonstration that could not last. Contrary to the mistaken notion of some of them, Christ had not risen to restore the kingdom of Israel but to prove his mastery over death and to reaffirm his promise of the Holy Spirit. When this was accomplished he disappeared from their view—the resurrection was over. How could the disciples conclude anything but that he had returned to God whence he had come?

Ascension and Virgin Birth

For the ascension completes the meaning of the birth of Christ. The great doctrines of the Christian faith were not just dreamed up by the early Christians but were forced on them as a result of events and experiences which clamored for interpretation. Five hundred years ago a small group of men set out to sea. They kept going and going on the same course until, much to their own astonishment, they came back to the place from whence they had started. The conclusion was inevitable: the earth was not flat but round! It was a strange, new doctrine, but it was built solidly upon personal experience.

So it was with the doctrine of Christ's birth, and with all the other major doctrines concerning his person and work. First came the event and the experience: A little boy was born of humble parents in the village of Bethlehem—he led a normal, obscure life in the provincial town of Nazareth—then, suddenly, he began a ministry of teaching and healing

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which simply could not be accounted for in ordinary human categories. His fellow-townsmen wondered, "Is not this Joseph's son?" The learned Pharisees were confused because "He spoke with authority." The disciples marvelled, "Who is this that even the winds and the waves obey Him?" At last, the truth dawned on one of them—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!" From that moment they knew that his coming into the world had been a special act of God—that somehow God was present in him in a unique way. This is what the evangelists tell us through the stories of his birth and the story of his ascension: that he came from God and returned to God. If the message of Christmas is "Beachhead Secured," Ascension Day spells out "Mission Accomplished."

Ascension and Crucifixion

The ascension also completes the meaning of the cross. On the cross God offered his own human life as a sacrifice for our sins. By his self-sacrifice, we are forgiven and reconciled to him. The word "atonement," broken up in a different way, can be pronounced "at-one-ment," because through the death of Christ our fellowship with God is restored—we are once again "at one" with Him.

But the ascension carries forward the same doctrine. In Old Testament times, the high priest would offer on the Day of Atonement a solemn sacrifice for the sins of the people. God's forgiveness would depend on His acceptance of this sacrifice. Once the sacrifice was accepted, the high priest would proceed through the veil into the Holy of Holies to offer prayers of intercession for the people. This, too, is suggested by the ascension of Christ—that having offered himself as God's once-and-for-all sacrifice for our sins on the cross, he then enters into God's presence as our high priest to exert a ministry of intercession on our behalf.

There is nothing so rewarding—nothing so encouraging—as the knowledge that someone is praying for us. We may be utterly alone—away from home for the first time or involved in a dilemma or difficulty for which there seems to be no solution; but if we know that day after day and night after night someone is commending us to God and asking his help for us, we take heart. And if the prayers of our loved ones can do so much for us, how much more can the prayers of Christ, our high priest!

Ascension and Reign

But Christ is more than our high priest; he is also our king, and the ascension marks visibly and spectacularly the beginning of his rule. He talked much about his kingdom, and was consistently and tragically misunderstood. His disciples misunderstood him in love, projecting upon him their longings for political freedom, for social status, for economic security. This was the meaning of the ovation they gave him when he entered Jerusalem for the last time. They hoped to crown him king; but they did not know that their pathetic desire for a king would put a crown of thorns on their Master's head—the only crown he would receive in his lifetime.

But after the resurrection they were convince that he had received the crown which alone wa worthy of him. They realized that he could not hav stayed with them, confined to a narrow strip of lan and a few narrow years, because his destiny was t rule everywhere and till the end of time. This, to is intimated by his ascension. In a beautiful volum entitled *Each With His Own Brush*, Daniel J. Flem ing has compiled a collection of Christian works c art from all over the world, particularly by non white artists. There is no more moving demonstra tion of the world-wideness of Christ than to se him represented as a member of the artist's race c nation. It shows us dramatically that he belongs t the whole world and that the whole world belong to him.

For this, too, is foreshadowed by the ascensio We see the disciples gazing up into the skies whe their Risen Lord has vanished. Then we hear wit them the challenging voice: "Men of Galilee, wh do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, wh was taken up from you into heaven, will come in th same way as you saw him go into heaven." Onc again, a literal reading of the scene will rob it c its meaning. What we have here is the divine assu ance that our parting from Christ is only temporar and that we may look forward to his glorious retur at a time known only to God.

Ascension and Return

In the days of the early Church this visible retur of Christ was thought to be imminent. A great de of what these Christians said and did has to b understood against the background of this belie which, on the surface, turned out to be mistake I say "on the surface," because on a far deeper lev they were right—gloriously right. Their separatio from their Lord was only temporary just as ou separation from him and from our loved ones is onl temporary. What their pagan neighbors calle death, they knew to be the gateway to life. And th faith has not changed. To this day, it is the uniqu privilege of Christians to look upon death and se only life, an endless life of fellowship with Chri and all his saints.

But this does not deny the hope of a second com ing of our Lord. He did not deprive us of this hop He only said, "It is not for you to fix the times c seasons which the Father has fixed by his ow authority." Speculation is as irreverent as it fruitless. We have a more exciting task—to demo strate to the world what this hope means in th present. "You shall receive power," Christ promise "and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth

So the ascension points to Pentecost. The angel command is touchingly practical: Stop loafing! G to work! It reminds us of how Peter, James, an John wanted to pitch their tents on the mounta where they had witnessed the transfiguration Jesus and how Jesus had told them to get dow because there was work to be done below. Penteco did not come to an idle church. Between the ascen sion and the coming of the Holy Spirit the Apostl

(Continued on page 16)

High Fidelity

By Charles C. Knapp

John 15:1-17

THE younger members of this congregation may not remember the old phonograph, or gramaphone. You date yourself approximately if you do remember it. There was one in the corner of the living room of our home. It was in a heavy, chest-high, golden oak cabinet. First of all the crank that projected from the side was wound to set the mechanism. Then a lid was lifted and propped open; the needle was checked to make sure that it was not worn too flat. A record, with chipped edges and scratched surface, of some popular operatic air, or perhaps a comedian, was inserted. And everything was ready. The music or the voice, whatever it may have been, was reproduced in a volume that could not be controlled at will, and could be heard only above the obvious scratching and attendant noises. If you were not careful, the mechanism would run down with a groan before you were through. It was a game of which one could quickly tire.

Faithful Reproduction of Sound

High fidelity is the present-day descendant of the gramaphone, but here the similarity ceases. In high fidelity, we have jewels instead of needles; we have electronic amplifiers by which the music can be reduced to a whisper or magnified to a volume that can fill a hall; high fidelity possesses one or more versatile speakers which can reproduce the highest and the lowest tones discernible to the human ear. The records now are of the long-playing, microgroove, slow-turning type, carefully brushed to remove all dust. And when they are set in place, we are able to listen to uninterrupted music—by the hour—with the records being changed automatically in sequence. The reproduction itself is of the highest quality, free of surface noises and distortions; it is the nearest thing to being present personally at an original performance.

I could easily become interested in high fidelity, or hi-fi, as it is abbreviated. But frankly, I am a little afraid of it. I tend to avoid the contagious and even fanatical light in the eyes of the hi-fi enthusiast! For with one or two other hobbies to be taken care of, the introduction of a third would deplete the exchequer.

What is high fidelity intended to do? As the phrase suggests, high fidelity is a system of the reproduction of sound by which great music—an orchestra, an instrument or a voice—is reproduced as faithfully and accurately. Listening to music on a good hi-fi system requires only the addition of a little imagination, and one is transported to its place of origin. High fidelity is a sensitive, flexible, honest electronic system; free of distortions, interferences, inadequacies. It brings forth music as it was intended to be heard.

Needless to say, my purpose in describing high fidelity to you has nothing to do with a promotional campaign. Rather, it is because I find in high fidelity a parable of life, supremely of the religious life. You and I are systems through which ideas, ideals, convictions and faiths may find expression. As professing Christians, our responsibility is to reveal in our time the meaning of the faith by which we live. Our true objective is to be high fidelity Christians: those who are able to express the meaning of Christ without distortion, without interference, letting our faith be heard and seen in its full breadth and depth, in all of its beauty and freedom.

True Expression of Faith

The ability so to reveal the meaning of Christ differs widely among us and in our time. Human expressions of the faith vary all the way from the low fidelity of the inadequate old gramaphone to the high fidelity of modern electronics. As one looks back over Christian history, or studies contemporary scenes, illustrations of this abound. For example, the religion of the 12th century had fallen into the doldrums; the truth of God in all its joy and freedom and redemptive power was scarcely to be heard. Then into the scene stepped St. Francis of Assisi, who permitted his life to become a faithful reproduction of the spirit of the Master. For the first time in decades, if not centuries, the glory of God revealed through a human life, was seen again. In our own time, a man whose name has become known to all is doing the same for us. For in the life of Albert Schweitzer, with its loving service, its implicit obedience, its rigorous and honest thinking, there are demonstrated the possibilities of a transformed and a transforming life in the spirit of Jesus

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Christ.

High fidelity in relation to one's self means integrity. According to the dictionary, integrity is the "state of being complete, undivided." Integrity means that a man is true to himself, true to his convictions in public as he cherishes them in private. Integrity means that he lives according to his highest and his best. There are two aspects to the human personality which are more or less coincident. The first is the private self; it is what we are in the privacy of our thoughts and our beliefs. There is the social self; that is what we are in the eyes of men. The man of integrity is the man whose private and whose social selves are as coincident as it is in his power to make them. He is not one thing to himself, or within his home, and then quite another when he is in his office, or out in the world. Integrity is high fidelity, the true reproduction of one's own self.

Some years ago in my native city there was played out a drama of religious controversy. The chief actor was a prominent minister who, because of his extreme fundamentalism, his fanatical adherence to outworn ideas, had managed to split the denomination. He engaged in an unremitting attack on every teacher or fellow minister or institution that did not share his beliefs. Another equally prominent minister possessed a more enlightened theology, and exercised a progressive ministry. Strangely enough, this minister was never attacked publicly. A friend of the reactionary came to him with a suggestion: "You have never condemned this man, and yet he is an enemy of all you contend for." To the credit of the fundamentalist, he said, "I will never attack him. For he is one man who does not believe one thing in his study and preach another in his pulpit. Everybody knows where he stands, and therefore he can speak for himself." I think this is one of the finest tributes to integrity I have ever heard. Here was a man who was in a state of being "complete, undivided." This is high fidelity to one's self.

Attaining Personal Integrity

Surely one of the goals of the Christian life is to arrive at this state of integrity. Peter demonstrated how far he had to go when he denied his Lord, in a moment of fear, and went out and wept bitterly. Saul of Tarsus found in Jesus Christ the answer to the basic problem in his life: "I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do." Salvation to him, at least, meant the attainment of personal integrity; the power to bring his performance to the level of his intentions. Emile Cailliet quotes a college president as saying: "Dying is inevitable, but arriving at the destination God offers to me is not inevitable." The life we live involves the serious business of expressing our moral and spiritual hopes and our goal in life as we live it now This is the meaning of salvation. Peter found integrity at last, disclosed in his forthright utterance to those who would have silenced him. He said, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge; for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard." He had discovered the power to be true to the glory of God and he had found it in Jesus Christ; he had discovered the grace to escape his fears and uncertainties.

In the light of the meaning of integrity, people at large may be divided into three groups. There are those, whose number fortunately is a minority, who possess few if any moral ideals or religious convictions. To them, integrity presents no problem at all; for in them there is nothing to be faithful to. Then there are those who possess ideals and convictions, but are so conscious of the pressures of society, so much the victims of their fears and weaknesses, that they live far below their convictions, compromise their principles, keep silent when they should speak, speak when they should be silent. For them, integrity is a dream and a frustration. Most men, I suspect, know the meaning of this situation. Their greatest suffering is what they cause themselves. The third group, once again a minority, are high fidelity souls: men and women who faithfully reproduce, for all to see, the strong faith and deep convictions that are theirs.

Love and Its Antithesis

High fidelity in social life means love. Love, in the Christian sense of the word, is a strong, active, creative force. The supreme Christian insight into the nature of God discerns that he is love. Of course there are other attributes: holiness, majesty, power. But one may believe all of these attributes of God and still not discover the God and Father of Jesus Christ. John put it forthrightly in his epistle: "Love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God; for God is love."

If we would know what love is, then consider it over against its antithesis: self-centeredness. Sin is self-centeredness; the turning inward toward self at the expense of others. It is living life for its own sake, without, or with little, regard for other men. Sin, as self-centeredness, finds myriad forms for its expression, in our homes, within society, in the animosities and tensions of people, in the confused and uncertain relationships of nation to nation, race to race. Self-centeredness destroys our communion with our fellow men, disrupts the serenity of the soul, and above all severs us from God. Love, on the other hand, is the outgoing of life toward God and our fellow men. Love is that power which enables us to heal, to forgive, to create. It is positive and redemptive; vicarious and self-sacrificing. Love is the very spirit of God. High fidelity in all of our relationships is the manifestation of love.

D. M. Baillie has provided us with his own myth or "divine emblem" of the Fall:

> I would tell a tale of God calling His human children to form a great circle for the playing of His game. In that circle we are all to be standing, linked together with lovingly joined hands, facing toward the Light in the center, which is God; see our fellow creatures all around the circle in the light of that central Love, which shines on them and beautifies their faces; and joining with them in the dance of God's great game, the rhythm of love universal. But instead of that, we have, each one, turned our backs upon God and the circle of our fellows, and faced the other way, so that we can see neither the Light at the

center nor the faces on the circumference. And indeed in that position it is difficult even to join hands with our fellows! Therefore instead of playing God's game we play, each one, our own selfish little game, like the perverse children Jesus saw in the market place, who would not join in the dance with their companions.*

An incident in the life of Martin Luther, illustrates how even the greatest of Christian spirits ıl at times to reproduce the love that is the ence of our faith. It resulted from the fact that Luther's contention against the religion of his ıe, he depended on the support of the princes d feudal overlords. These same princes and lords ld in subjection the great masses of peasants and fs who subsequently rose up in rebellion. Luther, aid for the security of his cause, fearful of rellion, the great rebel himself took the side of ustice. In a pamphlet against the peasant revolt wrote: "Therefore strike, throttle, stab, secretly openly, he who can, and remember that there is thing more poisonous, more hurtful or more vilish than a rebellious man." At this point ıther lapsed from high fidelity and permitted the ve of God within his heart to be overwhelmed by e fear of men.

High fidelity in relation to our God means obedice. The conception underlying high fidelity is that should be a perfect instrument—an instrument mpletely expressive, which, when functioning propy, can bring all the attention to bear on the music reproduces, losing itself, so to speak, to the funcon it fulfills.

God's Perfect Instrument

In the religious life, high fidelity means that life comes a perfect instrument in the hands of God; is the subjection of self to his will. It is life held a completely adequate instrument for a higher ırpose. In this I find the meaning of the sinlessness Jesus. From the dawning of his religious conıousness Jesus made the Father's will, so far as understood it, his own will. In the great initial mptation, time and again he thrust the possibility sinful compromise aside by asserting that it is ritten: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God ıd him only shalt thou serve." Completely free of self-consciousness he was able to say later on th regard to his Father's purpose, "I do always ose things that please him." In the garden of ethsemane, where his problem was uncertainty ther than unwillingness, he prayed, "Nevertheless, ot my will, but thine be done."

His conversation with the disciples, as recorded John 15, provides his conception of what displeship should involve. It is high fidelity discipleip. He said to them, "This is my commandment, at you love one another as I have loved you. . . . ou are my friends if you do what I command you. o longer do I call you servants, for the servant oes not know what his master is doing; but I have lled you friends, for all that I have heard from y Father I have made known to you." Thus he arified for them what their relationship to him, nd through him to God, should be. A relationship such as obtains between friends—steadfast in its loyalty, implicit in its obedience.

The parable of high fidelity breaks down at last as all parables do. It ceases to be accurate when we contrast the difference between the high fidelity system and the human personality. For the former is, after all, a thing of wires, tubes, electric circuits and mechanics. It has no mind or will of its own. The human personality, on the other hand, is an infinitely complex thing; it is compounded of those forces deriving from environment, heredity; it is the vehicle of hopes and fears, freedoms and slaveries.

The parable breaks down because it suggests that if Christians all attained the status of high fidelity they would be passive, saying, thinking, doing the same thing. But this is not so. For we are made different and in our lives demonstrate the meaning of God, not despite our individuality but through it, not setting aside our freedom but confirming it. And just as musical inspiration, making use of common material and familiar instruments, produces an infinite variety of sound; so the spirit of God, operating in human life, reveals the infinite variety of ways in which the meaning of God in life may be disclosed. High fidelity Christians are not passive; they are active, losing themselves to find themselves at the higher levels of God's purpose.

*D. M. Baillie, *God Was in Christ* (New York: Scribners). Used by mission.

Prayer at Graduation

OUR Father, we are thankful for work to do and strength to do it; for knowledge imparted and insights grasped; for friends and life companions; for crossroads and the maturity that has enabled us to make choices that have increased our wisdom and made us disciples of the noble.

We are happy in this hour of graduation when we reflect that over the way have been tears, disappointments, problems and difficult experiences. Grant, O Father, that the jobs we choose may be exacting in proportion to our opportunities and that they will find us in the stream of life where the flow of its current matters most.

For all those who have inspired and helped us along the way, we thank thee, Lord. We would be humble in the presence of our spiritual witnesses. Help them, O Father, to keep aglow their zeal and the desire to help others.

Forgive us, Father, for our indifference to need, our blindness to light and our apathy where neighborliness was invited. As we face our communities, where people lacking light cannot fully develop their personalities, increase our strength and continue its supply as we bring these dwellers to equitable places where they may share the sensitivity of the full life. Amen.—*Thomas J. Pugh, Chaplain and Dean of Men, Albany State College, Albany, Georgia.*

Ascension

(Continued from page 12)

were hard at work. They were consolidating their spiritual gains by corporate prayer and meditation in that upper room. They were also consolidating their organization. The place which Judas had deserted had to be filled. It was not easy to find the right man. Finally, a disciple named Matthias was elected.

The day of Pentecost found them on the job. They were all "with one accord in one place," the army of God, twelve men strong, waiting for his signal, ready to march. A world to conquer lay before them. The whole world was there in miniature, represented by delegations of Jews from the four corners of the earth who had come to Jerusalem to worship in the Temple, and who, by God's design were going to be exposed to the gospel. And as Peter began to preach, he silently thanked God—for the thousandth time—that his last glimpse of the Master was not of the crucified but of the risen Christ mounting slowly and majestically toward his heavenly throne.

An Anniversary Prayer

For all the saints, who from their labors rest,
Who Thee by faith before the world confessed,
Thy name, O Jesus, be forever blest;
Alleluia, alleluia.

We praise thee especially, O God, for those saints of thine by whose years of faithful labors this church was founded and established and strengthened and made fruitful unto life abundant and eternal. As we remember them before thee at this anniversary celebration, may our hearts be filled with gratitude to them and to thee. With desire and determination may we become more worthy of their fellowship and the heritage they have left us by following their example of sacrificial consecration to Christ and his church. Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, help us to lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely. Help us to run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of thy throne, O God. May those whose work in and for this church is not finished realize that to honor sincerely those who long wrought here wisely and well, and to make the future of this church more fruitful unto life abundant and eternal, requires their own working together with thee, in mutual love and devotion. In the name and for the sake of Christ, who loved the church and gave himself up for it, that he might present it to himself, a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, holy and without blemish. Amen.—*John C. Pryor, at the 95th anniversary of the First Congregational Church of Weeping Water, Nebraska.*

RSV

In my Father's house are many rooms.
John 14:2.

FAULTLESS translation this,
Changing many rooms to many mansions.
Exegesis,
Born of the best schools
And well-typed language thesis.

Yet when I read rooms,
You'll pardon me, you learned men,
I think of Mrs. Vinson's place down town—
The sign "For Rent,"
Tall weeds,
A broken window,
Creaky stairs,
And all things worn
And bent.

Rooms!
Are we to be lodgers in heaven?
Visitors?
Transients?
Overnight?
Is God running a boardinghouse?
Rooms!
Ill-painted word,
Old wood
And faded white.

Rooms may be the right word
But does it ring quite true?
He who made the world and worlds—
This lowly, waving, grass,
Fresh tipped
With morning dew.

Put back that old word mansions,
Unsound to Greekists now maybe,
Or keep the thought
For it's matched to mind of Him
Who made the gorgeous earth,
Those distant stars,
And fixed
This shimmering sea.

ELLIS JONES HOUGH.

Fine Lines from a Prayer

O GOD who dost purpose thy Church to be th
continuing body of the everliving Christ, so visi
with thy spirit the ministers and members of thi
church and congregation that those who hav
sought here a sense of belonging may find this i
no superficial enlargement of their natural taste
and in no easy sanction of an enclosed goodwil
Break through our restricted charity with the ou
rageous demands of thy most holy love, and fac
us with the poor, the lonely, the inept, the outcas
even the least of all thy children whom thou has
led us by thine own divine example to love an
serve through Jesus Christ thy Son, our Lor
Amen.—*Loring D. Chase, New Canaan Congrega
tional Church, New Canaan Connecticut.*

A Sermon for Trinity Sunday

Father, Son and Holy Spirit

By Lawrence L. Gruman

A certain man had three sons. As the boys approached maturity the man determined that he would treat each one with the utmost kindness when he reached his eighteenth birthday. Kindly concern for each personality was to be the sole factor in the decision. When the eldest became eighteen, the man decided that since he was a boy with eager determination he could make his own way in the world; so the man gave him only his blessing. Later, to the second son, who was particularly talented, he gave full support for the boy's education in college and graduate school. At last, when the third boy, a dreamer, reached the day of decision, the man turned over half of his fortune to him. Now, I do not defend the *wisdom* of this man as he tried to be kind, but I do point out that in this instance the single motive of *kindness* was expressed in three totally different ways.

On winter days, many of you have a common experience. You go to an ice-skating rink, change your skates in a warming-house. Before going outside you take a drink of water. You go out and glide across the ice on your skates. And you notice that your breath appears white as it meets the cold outside air. Now these three things—water, ice and vapor—are quite different from each other, yet they are all water! Or, if you like, they are different expressions of water! Here is unity and diversity in an instant.

The Realm of Possibility

Now, if a single human motive can be expressed in three ways, and if the same thing is true of a physical substance, let us not rule out the *possibility* of God's showing himself thus. It is easy to get lost in the cool tombs of logic here, or to be sidetracked into psychology, but let us walk through the door of possibility. If we linger on the point of departure, we will be like the argumentative athlete who debated his team's chances in the big game for so long that he missed the whole game.

Granting that a God who is one and three at the same time is *possible*, let us turn to the question of why a three-part God is *essential* to our faith. I suggest two preliminary considerations: (1) For two thousand years the authentic center of the Christian tradition has been a God who expressed himself in three ways. This three dimensional God has captured men's imaginations in every age and place. Hymns, creeds, poems and doctrines of the church all revolve around this central conviction.

(2) The major heresies have appeared when men singled out one of the three aspects of God to the neglect of others. It is, of course, tempting to simplify one's thinking in this way, but to do so is to worship a fragmentary God. The trouble is that the concept becomes stale, and is put aside in favor of a fresher idea around which we can center our loyalties. So, such heresies have been short-lived; and the thread which runs so true, this three-dimensioned God, has emerged at the end of the fabric triumphant. There is some truth to the idea that you simply cannot elude a God who comes in three ways. He challenges every motive, every hope, every idea—he meets you everywhere you turn.

Now, about this God who is one and three at the same time. What is there essential about His three modes of being?

First, every thinking person agrees that God is a creator. Wide approval meets the Psalmist's judgment that it is the fool who says in his heart, "There is no God!" Some come to this conclusion about the creator God by analogy. They say that anyone looking at a watch whose intricate mechanism registers accurately the movement of the earth for months on end must see beyond the watch a watchmaker. In a like way the intelligent man looks at the incredible balance of natural forces in the world, the stars and the tides, the rhythm of the seasons, and he must see beyond to a Maker—a Maker who once created and now sustains this gigantic system of forces.

Others come to the creator-God by an analysis of the human mind. For when the mind seeks to explain such a simple matter as a chain of causes that stretches back into the past, it reaches a baffling boundary. Finally, you see, you have to believe that the chain of events that make up our world has gone on forever—or that there was a first cause. The explanation of this first cause, like that of the first motion or the first being is God the Creator.

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Now the Hebrew-Christian tradition would have it differently. This suggests that the true picture does not have man reaching out to God so much as it has God reaching out to man. God, it says, disclosed himself to man as "He who is," "He who causes to be all that is." This tradition has at least the virtue that it does not present a God "discovered" by mental processes and therefore subject to our mental distortions. On the contrary, the Hebrew-Christian God takes the initiative; He is far beyond mere creator or cause.

For the Christian, God is Father. As an earthly father loves his children, so God loves us; and as any father we know teaches his children the painful lessons of life (even with a breaking heart) so God deals with us. It is thus that the Christian accepts evil in the world as somehow the Father's will for him. And it is thus that we seek out God's power to help us conquer the evil that grows from our own misuse of freedom. Here is a power to stimulate and sustain anyone who really thinks; because here alone is the One who will not be de-personalized and called "He" or "It"—only "Thou" on the lips of His children will suffice.

Second, every religious person agrees that Jesus was a special human being; that he was invested with "divine" powers, that he had an extraordinary perception, that he had a peculiar closeness to God. Jew, Hindu, Mohammedan—every religious person senses unerringly these singular qualities in Jesus.

Yet the Christian takes a further step; he says that Jesus is the Christ. This is to say that Jesus Christ is God in a human body, and that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. This entrance of God into human history opens up a new way of knowing God; no longer can God be regarded as aloof from life. Rather, he is present, enmeshed in history, suffering as we suffer, sharing human weakness, dealing momentarily with human sin within and without. So you see, when the cosmic curtain parted and the divine drama began with all its advance notice that the Holy God would reveal himself in arresting clarity, there was revealed *a man!* And not just any man, but a servant, a servant who suffered. This Jesus, who appeared to the unpracticed eye as an exceptional man, was through the eyes of faith God erasing the past and giving man a whole new start in life.

Third, any person can receive the Holy Spirit. We see many examples of common grace running through the most ordinary human life. All of us have experienced the undeserved strength that buoys us up through troubles. We know at first hand the unearned increment of friendship that is poured on us. And even non-professing Christians have this experience of the Holy Spirit working in the midst of life. This should not surprise anyone familiar with the message of the Hebrew prophets, Joel, for example:

> And it shall come to pass afterward,
> that I will pour out my spirit on
> all flesh;
> your sons and your daughters shall
> prophesy,
> your old men shall dream dreams,
> and your young men shall see
> visions.
> Even upon the menservants and
> maidservants
> in those days, I will pour out my
> spirit

Here is God's kind of democracy, for surely everyone reflects something of His Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit

But the Christian identifies the Holy Spirit and allows himself to be used by It. We said a moment ago that Jesus the Christ gives us a new start in life. How? By showing God's ineradicable love for us and then by giving us the Holy Spirit: "I will pray the Father and he will send another Counselor, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth who . . . dwells with you and will be in you."

The disciples who gathered around Jesus made the discovery first. They had known an irresistable divine Presence whenever they were with Jesus; it strengthened them, encouraged their noblest impulses. But when he was taken away the mysterious Presence also disappeared. Then one day they gathered together to recall his teachings and to pray in His name—and lo! the Presence became alive in their midst! Jesus had left them, but the Spirit burned within them as brightly as ever. And a further discovery was yet to be made, that the Spirit appeared even to those who had never seen Jesus. For when the story of His life was told, and when men's own lives witnessed to Christ's power, the Spirit quickened the hearts of those who heard.

Now, what does the Holy Spirit do? Very simply, it gives us memory of what Christ taught and a developing understanding of it. The Spirit awakens us to God's leading for our lives. And it makes a home for God in our hearts. That's all. But that slim list of the Spirit's functions does for us what we cannot do ourselves—it gives a heavenly quality to our earthbound lives.

Yes, God is in three persons, blessed trinity! The real question is not whether God is a person, however. For you the issue is whether or not you are! Are you one who grows through the constant challenge of a full-dimensioned God? Then you are a person, for the distinctive mark of a person is growth. He will not grow in faith whose God is a benign old gentleman with a beard, or a pale Galilean, or an emotional experience. No, such fragmentary Gods are objects of worship for fragmentary human beings. He who is a person in the fullness of human potentialities will have a God who is at once a stalwart commanding Father, a humble suffering Son and an enobling, sensitizing Holy Spirit.

This Is My Body

HE was the Word that spake it,
He took the bread and brake it;
And what that Word did make it,
I do believe and take it.

JOHN DONNE

Alike to All

Kenneth MacLean Glazier

THE Royal Ontario Museum recently concluded a special exhibit on the history of printing, particularly the printing of the Bible. The motto chosen for the exhibit, and inscribed in large letters on a panel, was from the Book of Ecclesiastes: "Of making many books there is no end." There are many other familiar sayings from this book, and some have been adopted as mottoes for life, such as "A living dog is better than a dead lion." College students are particularly fond of a verse which reads, "Much study is a weariness of the flesh." And we were all impressed with the stern words, "Remember also your creator in the days of your youth."

Who was the man who wrote these and many other familiar sayings which have crept into our general conversation, and what did he mean by the words of our text, which may be taken as a kind of summary of his philosophy of life?

Vain Boasting

The book is called Ecclesiastes, but that is a word which denotes little in our current vocabulary. The Hebrew name is *Koheleth* and can be understood as Preacher, Teacher, Debater, Philosopher, or even more accurately "One Who Meditates." The book consists of a series of sentences—often quite unrelated—as the writer meditates upon life and sets down his thoughts. Some people have felt that the writer is too frank in what he says about life, too critical, too cynical, and at times even too skeptical. But the more one ponders his words one realizes that he has looked at the vanity of all human pretensions, especially pride of knowledge, and sees how empty the boasting can be. "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity."

One of the things which he observes about life and which impresses him most is that "one fate comes to all, to the righteous, and the wicked." And that is true in large measure. When accidents come, whether on a train, in an airplane, or in a car, there is one fate for all—the righteous and unrighteous. When sickness comes, it comes to all—the good and the bad. Pains and sorrows of life come to all—no one escapes. The difficulties and doubts of life are one to all. And in the end, death itself comes to all alike.

Thomas Gray put the thought eloquently in the "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard":

> "The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r
> And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
> Await alike the inevitable hour.
> The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

The New Testament confirms that the events of life are alike to all. Remember the words of Jesus when he said, "For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matthew 5:45). The blessings of God descend on the evil and on the good alike! But why is this so? It is because we live in a world of law and order, not of chaos and confusion. The sun and the rain obey God's laws of nature, independent of human caprice or personal favoritism. One of the basic laws of nature is the law of gravitation. We depend on it to build homes and bridges, factories and hospitals, Without this law all construction would cease. But the same law which operates in the building of a hospital for sick children is operating when a baby leans too far over the edge of the crib and falls out. You cannot have the law operate in one situation and not in another.

No Contradictions

There are some things which God can't do. He can't contradict his very nature which is law and order. There was a widely held view in Old Testament times that somehow the sun and rain would come only to the fields of the righteous, and a failure of these blessings of nature was a sign of God's displeasure. We have a saying when one enjoys prosperity: "He must be living right." Jesus swept away all these human calculations about material prosperity and good fortune and said rather that there is an impartiality about God in the bestowal of his gifts.

This is true not only of material things but also gifts of the spirit. There are spiritual gifts and graces which God gives to all alike. This thought is beautifully expressed in Luke 6:35. Jesus is

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speaking about loving our enemies: "And you will be sons of the Most High," and then he adds this about God: "For he is kind to the ungrateful and to the selfish." That God should be kind to the grateful and to the good, we can understand: but that He should be kind to the ungrateful and to the selfish, to those who have never stopped long enough on the road of life to acknowledge their maker, defender, redeemer and friend—that is something which we cannot understand. Yet, this is God's way. And when we think of it we know we all stand in need of God's grace.

We want God to be partial but we expect impartiality in our dealings with our fellowmen. Children at home expect their parents to be impartial, and any departure from this accepted rule quickly brings trouble. In the work-a-day world of business, men and women expect to be treated on a basis of merit and not on personal favoritism. We expect that the judge in the court will decide the case on the basis of evidence, and that the jury will be an impartial panel. Wherever we go and whatever we do in the ordinary round of life we expect impartiality.

And yet this quality which we so look for in our fellowmen, we do not expect to be an attribute of God. Somehow we do not want God to be impartial; we want him to be partial—particularly toward us. We want God to show some favoritism toward us, and if he doesn't we think we are being ill-treated. His other attributes—his love, righteousness, truth—are accepted almost without question, but to believe that he is impartial is more than we can stand. We want God to be partial toward our race, our nation, our religion, our family, our friends, our fortune.

The Response of the Gospel

But Ecclesiastes is right—the events of life are alike to all, and the Christian gospel does not deny that. But the Christian gospel goes beyond the fact of the event to our response to the event. The events are the same but the response is different.

Jesus makes this distinction clear in one of his parables:

> "Every one then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And every one who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand; and the rains fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat against the house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it." (Matthew 7:24-27).

The point of the parable is that the rain and the wind and the floods were the same for both, but one had the strength of character to meet it, and the other had nothing. How true of life, and every day provides us opportunity to prove it. You have all seen people who crumble under a light affliction, and others whose lives come to a new height of greatness under the storms of life.

Sir Walter Scott and Lord Bryon suffered from a similar infirmity—but how differently they responded. Byron occupied a good deal of his life in rebellion against life and defiance of God. But no one can read the life of Sir Walter Scott without being impressed by the warmth of his life, the sense of obligation which he had. There was no murmur of complaint when financial burdens for which he wasn't responsible were heaped upon him. He loved life. He loved his fellowmen and he loved the Lord of Life. Events come alike to all, but we can respond so differently. A friend once said to a lady who had been called to suffer much, "How suffering colors life." To which the gently lady replied, "Yes, suffering colors life; and I propose to choose the color." Some choose a somber gray and others choose a bright and brilliant red, the color of a royal standard of triumph.

The Three Crosses

There were three crosses on Calvary. The cynic standing by could truthfully say, "All things come alike to all; there is one event for the righteous and for the wicked." It is true that our Lord was crucified between two thieves, and we can understand our Lord's Cross only as we see it against the sky which had two other crosses. There was on Calvary not only the cross of the just, but the unjust; the righteous and the unrighteous; the innocent and the guilty. The outward event was the same for all three, but the inward response was different. One was an unrepentant criminal who joined in the mockery and insults which were hurled at our Lord, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us." This was a taunt and a temptation which was hurled at Christ, but he refused to do anything dramatic to compel men to believe. This was the response of the unredeemed. On the other side was a malefactor or thief who also began by reviling Christ, but after watching our Lord he was moved to say, "Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingly power." And Jesus replied "Truly I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise." This was the response of the repentant and out of the dust of defeat in life a soul found the peace of the divine forgiveness. This was the response of the redeemed. And in the center was the Redeemer—"God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." The outsider looking at Calvary would surely say, "One fate comes to all." Three crosses, but when we look more closely we see one event but three responses: the unredeemed, the redeemed, and the Redeemer.

Choosing Our Outlook

There is a story of Nicoli Paganini, the great Italian virtuoso of the violin in the early years of the 19th century, when he was performing at the court of Napoleon Bonaparte. While he was playing two strings broke and the spontaneous remark would have been, "What a pity." But Napoleon's sister had a wiser word: "One string would be enough for you." Thereupon Paganini composed his military sonata for the G string.

In the performance of life there are times when the strings break and the harmony of life is shattered, and we don't have all we think we need to

(Continued on page 23)

A Baccalaureate Sermon

If I Should Die Before I Live

By George E. Fox

Romans 12:20, Phillips

AS I recall my own experiences, I always suspect seniors come to a time like this with mixed feelings, and that one of the feelings is that it's sort of a duty, a ceremony which has to be gone through with whether we like it or not.

At the same time, I know that some of you have deeper feelings about this occasion. It is significant that you have taken time in these busy days to pause and give thanks to God for the privilege of an education, for the men and women who have guided you through twelve years of schooling, for your parents and pastors and others who have encouraged you. But you are not only giving thanks to God for the high privilege of an education, you are asking his blessing and his guidance as you begin to put your education to use. Moreover you are testifying that the truth that you have been learning these twelve years is God's truth. So graduation and all of life's events have a spiritual importance which this service recognizes.

I

How long has it been since you prayed:

> Now I lay me down to sleep,
> I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to keep;
> If I should die before I wake
> I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to take.

This prayer from our childhood gives us a clue to our theme on this occasion, except that instead of "If I should die before I wake," let's put it this way, "If I should die before I live!"

There is a legend from ancient Persia which tells of a prince who had the idea of dividing his life into four ten-year periods: the first for travel and pleasure, the second for affairs of government, the third for friendship and the fourth for God. Unfortunately, we will never know how it might have worked out, for he died at the end of the first ten years.

The old-time revival preacher would present the same message by saying, "Come to Jesus now, for you never know when your life may end. Tomorrow may be too late." Whether we appreciate that approach or not, in this age when almost 40,000 people are killed in auto accidents yearly, we would have to agree that there's a soundness to the warning.

But the legend illustrates an even more fundamental truth. There are many people who keep putting off some of the basic issues of life; who drift without ever trying to learn the real meaning and purpose of life; persons who let life push them around.

I admit that such a spineless approach to life holds a certain attraction. For one thing, it means a minimum of responsibility. It means that a person can give his whole attention to himself without concern for the needs, rights and desires of others. Yet we all know that to make life satisfying we must have interests, ambitions and responsibilities that go beyond ourselves.

I'm sure that every minister has had the experience of talking with persons about the Christian life, only to receive the reply, "Sure, I want to be a Christian, but not just yet. I want to live a little first." The implication is that the Christian life is a hindrance to a full, enjoyable existence. Actually the very opposite is true. There are some fundamentals which ought to become a part of life at as early an age as possible, for they help to get life off on the right foot. This is especially important to you now that many choices are before you.

II

To have a really satisfying life, you will need to give serious attention to such matters. For example, you must develop your abilities to their fullest extent. No one can be really happy unless he does so. Your abilities are God's investment in you, given to you because he thought you could be trusted with them. He has every right to expect you to make good on that investment.

All of your life you have been growing up physi-

HAROLD E. FOX, *pastor since 1950 of Sugar Creek and Union Hill Evangelical and United Brethren churches in Tuscarawas County, Ohio, is a rural parson by choice. Although he attended Ohio State University to prepare for a career in agriculture, he was graduated from Otterbein College and United Theological Seminary. He has done graduate work at Oberlin College. He has served as secretary to his conference's commission on the town and country church.*

cally. Now that process is almost complete. These twelve years of school have been aimed at helping you to mature mentally, a process that is never finished. But another important part of maturing is growing up morally, learning to seek always the best. We all know people who are grown up physically and mentally but who are still babies morally. They are not only dangerous to their communities and to society in general but destroy their own happiness as well. I know that it is fashionable to believe that high moral standards are a hindrance to the enjoyment of life rather than a help and some of you may have that attitude, but I say that the moral code cannot be ignored.

We know that if a man jumps off a building, he will fall. He is simply obeying one of the laws of nature, the law of gravity. When God created the world, he made these natural laws a part of it. We accept them, expect them to work and organize our life around them. In the same way, God made moral laws by which we can live holy lives. But he took the great chance of making us free to choose, so that we can either live by his laws or ignore them. We must understand that if we choose to follow God's plan and obey his laws, we will also know his joys; but if, instead, we make our own rules for life, we must expect results which are quite different and much less satisfactory. We can't have both. We can't ignore God's laws and still get God's results.

Seek always for the best, for you will thereby find the greatest happiness. Give your first loyalties to those things which are good and right.

> What you learned [from Christ] was to fling off the dirty clothes of the old way of living, which were rotted through and through with lust's illusions, and, with yourselves mentally and spiritually remade, to put on the clean fresh clothes of the new life which was made by God's design for righteousness and the holiness which is no illusion *Eph. 4:20*[1]

III

In addition, I urge you to find a Christian occupation. This does not mean that you must become a minister or a missionary. God is as pleased with a Christian housewife, a Christian businessman, or a Christian farmer as he is with a Christian minister; but I urge you, with God's leading, to find a job which is of service to your fellow man and then to do that job, not for money alone, but to glorify your Heavenly Father. Just as all of life is sacred, any useful occupation is a holy calling. My prayer for you is that you may find your job a partnership with God, at which you and he are working together creatively.

Along with this, you will learn that satisfaction comes not from getting, but from giving; not from being served, but from serving. Jesus said: "Whoever would be great among you must be your servant . . . for the Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister." The wise Christian will do more than he gets paid for doing, because in so doing he finds self-respect and satisfaction.

Finally, if you would really live during your years on this earth, make an intelligent commitment of your life to God. The Apostle Paul said it this way in writing to Rome:

> With eyes wide open to the mercies of God, I beg you, my brothers, as an act of intelligent worship, to give him your bodies, as a living sacrifice, consecrated to him and acceptable by him. Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould, but let God remould your minds from within, so that you may prove in practice that the plan of God for you is good, meets all his demands, and moves toward the goal of true maturity. *Romans 12:1ff*[2]

Some of you will shrug and say, "I'm just not interested." Yet there can be no wholesome and full life until and unless we are committed to the will of God, without apology and without reservation. That conviction is based on three things: personal experience, common sense, and the experience of Christians and non-Christians alike.

IV

We owe allegiance to God for two reasons. First of all, because he made us and therefore we belong to him. When we live and work for him, we are working with all the creative forces of the universe. If we choose to live and work against him, we are fighting all the world which he has made, and we can't win. In the second place, God gave his only Son for our soul's sakes. Out of gratitude and thankfulness we owe him our life and service.

I suppose there's really a third reason, too—the fact is that we get just what we pay for in life. We can expect an exciting and joyful life only if we are willing to pay the price in terms of prayer, service and loyalty to God. Life really says to us, in the words of an old proverb: Take what you want—take it, *and pay for it.*

I'm not pleading with you just to get your names on a church roll. It takes something more than that. Neither am I suggesting that you indulge in emotional outbursts over religion. They too easily become substitutes for something deeper and more stable. But I am saying: Make an *intelligent* commitment of your life to God.

In religion, as in most of life, there is always a temptation and a pressure to conform, to be conventional. So religion for some does become dull, stuffy, routine. But that is not God's idea. May you not only learn to go through the motions of good and godliness, but that you catch the spirit of that life, too. May you discover from your own experience that there is a God who stands beyond us and our little ideas, and that our inner divisions, our fears and our doubts, can be healed only in a personal meeting with him. May you have the Christian courage to decide that a world full of brothers is more important than a pocket full of dollars.

May you become experts not only at diagnosing the ills of humanity, but at healing them; for the big question of our day is not "What do you think?" but "What can I do?" In God's strength, you are the ones who can, and must, be up and doing, bringing mankind to an awareness of God's lordship and of total dependence on him.

[1]J. B. Phillips, *Letters to Young Churches* (New York: Macmillan, 1948). Used by permission.

[2]*Op. cit.*

Give thanks to God that you can live in such a me as this. He might have brought you to life in day of relatively easy living and few challenges. nstead, he has put you here in a time of unrest nd change and given you the problem of living ogether on a world-wide scale, and of learning how o handle rightly the inventions of the laboratories. he very fact that he put you here *now* shows you is great faith in you. May you never disappoint is trust.

God wants you to have all joy and purpose and ope in living. He wants to help you with it, beinning right at this moment. Discover what you an become as a person, and then begin on it right way. Grow up morally. Find a Christian occupaon and give it your best. Make an intelligent comitment of your life to God.

"Don't allow yourselves to be overpowered by vil. Take the offensive—overpower evil by good."

Alike

(Continued from page 20)

ake any music in our souls. We have to take what left and make a melody out of that. Some people ould just put the violin down, because all things ome to all alike. But what matters is our response life.

> "All things come alike to all;
> there is one event to the righteous
> and to the wicked."

ne event but many responses. And may our hristian faith and the God whom we serve in esus Christ give us grace that we may respond obly to the events of life.

Prayer at Graduation

ETERNAL God, who alone canst give meaning and purpose to life, who has written thy law to the very heart of the universe and caused our vn hearts to be restless within us until they rest thee, grant us a sense of thy presence in this gnificant hour.

Our days are set in times of tension; grant us a newed faith in the intangible and unshakeable ings of the spirit. Give us faith in thy redemptive urpose for all the children of men, faith in ourlves and in our fellowmen. Make us aware that ur power can never be measured by the things we ossess but by the spirit and the purpose which ossesses us.

Gratefully we acknowledge our debt to men and omen of generations past—to the men who estabhed this school in prayer to enable young people make their contribution to the common life larger rough trained intelligence and devoted commitent to the common good.

May this commencement day bring to this class and to us all a renewed recognition of the dignity of decency and the power of purity. We do not pray that all difficulties shall for them be removed, but that they may face every test with calm courage and the conviction that integrity of mind and soul are the true measures of man's worth.

Save them and us from the conceit of small minds and the cynicism of shrivelled souls. Keep them and us free from the prejudice which will not think and the pride which will not pray.

May their faith in thee and thy will for the sons of man work itself out in all the relationships of life. Enable us all to see human need anywhere as a challenge to share and the presence of fear as a challenge to create fellowship.

Whatever may be the tensions and the confusion of our day, however dark the hours may seem, may it be our accepted task to face toward the light. Having known thee in every time of trial may we all reveal calm courage to troubled hearts and firm faith to fearful souls so that true values can be retrieved, dimmed ideals may be recovered and the reservoir of good will kept filled.

May we ever keep our heads and guard our hearts through the mind and spirit of the Christ whom we own as Lord and adore as Savior. Amen.—*R. G. Riemann, D.D., First Presbyterian Church, Royal Oak, Mich.*

What Shall We Say?

WHAT shall we say to them—
The rootless ones?
They who have lost the faith
Their fathers gave them
They who in desperate faithfulness
Reject the new
Yet cannot keep the old.

Their anchor chains are broken
Yet the rope
We offer them seems all too slim
For rescuing
Such heavy hearts—such massive
Dreams and fears
As weigh them down.

How shall we comfort them,
The inconsolable?
How rescue them who will not
Dare to stretch
One finger past the roads
They've always known
To help themselves.

Where will they go then,
The rootless ones,
They who have closed off the roads
Behind themselves
And will not explore ahead?
Show us, they say, that the road is good
And then, perhaps, we will venture.

C. P. FREEDMAN.

A baccalaureate sermon outline

New Roads to Travel

By Gary Bousman

SOME three thousand years ago a large group of people were standing on the banks of the Jordan River. Their new leader, Joshua by name, was making a speech. It was a memorable occasion —one that called for a speech. These people had suffered a great deal. They were displaced persons. Now they were about to move into a land which was to be their home.

As they stood there on the banks of the river they heard their leader remind them of the glories of the past and of the things they had had to endure. He told them concerning God's promise and what they might expect in their new home. Then pointing to the land beyond the river he said, "You have never gone over this road before" (Goodspeed).

Decisions and Responsibilities

To you who are graduating from high school, I say what Joshua said to the ancient Israelites: "You have never gone over this road before." You are about to cross a river and you are about to move into a strange land. You have new roads to travel. Within the next hundred days you will probably make some of the most radical changes in your life.

You will have new freedoms. You will make new friends. You will have to make new decisions. You will shoulder responsibilities you never had to carry before. You will have to decide what vocation you plan to enter if you have not already done so.

Sometime within the next five years most of you will have chosen the person with whom you are going to spend the rest of your life. Perhaps some of you think you have already decided that, though statistics show that you will very likely change your mind several times before you take the final step. Your future husband or wife is somewhere in the world today. When we finish this service you will be one hour closer to your mate than you were when we started.

Part of your well-being will be determined by this momentous decision. Yet I cannot resist the temptation to say that your happiness in marriage is not entirely dependent upon the person you marry. More than on that, it will depend upon the type of person your future husband or wife marries.

Healthful Attitudes

These are only a few examples of the roads that are going to open up before you. I am not going to attempt to tell you which roads you should take. You will have to make your own decisions. But the choices you make will be determined largely by the attitudes you form in your mind. And what are those attitudes? May I suggest several that might be helpful to anyone attempting to travel these new roads.

For one thing, you can choose these new roads with greater ease if you bear in mind that you still have a lot to learn. Now that may not be an easy attitude to grasp at the moment. It is much easier to assume that once you get your high school diploma you have learned about all there is to learn. In a sense this is the "commencement" of your education. When a man or woman discovers that there is still much to be learned in life, and seeks with eager anticipation the achievement of more knowledge, he or she has learned one of the profound lessons of life.

Another important attitude concerns your relationship to the community and to other people. Your success in your vocation and as a homemaker will not depend entirely upon what grades you received here at school. They count. Yet a person can have ever so many scholastic honors and still make a miserable showing in life. How you get along with others and how much you care about their well-being may help you choose the right roads.

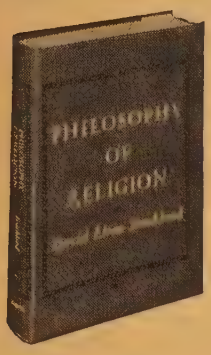
Most Important Question

And now for one more attitude. Let us put it in the form of a question: What do you think of the universe? Does it have purpose? Do you believe in the ultimate triumph of the Kingdom of God? What

(Continued on page 27)

GARY BOUSMAN *last year became pastor of Plymouth Congregational Church in Fargo, North Dakota, after several years as minister of First Congregational Church, Alexandria, Minnesota.*

Elton Trueblood's major work



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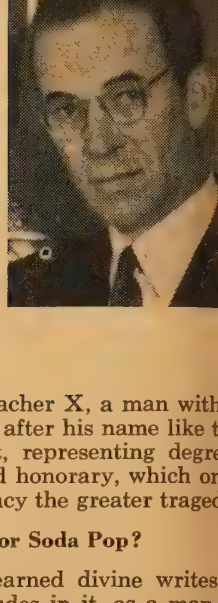

Pap from the Pulpit

By Russell Cartwright Stroup

TO sit, for a change, with the congregation, or to read a collection of "best" sermons is to be appalled by the literary insensitivity of our clergy. Homiletically their sermons may be brilliant, their theology sound, but their literary allusions, almost without exception, will prove to be Bartlett out of Readers Digest. Doggerel and piggerel and the hairiest of rhymed cliché will be called upon to perform the task of poetry—there will be nary a lion among them.

Let us consider, for example, a recent sermonic anthology. The preachers represented are no hedgerow parsons. The sermons selected are the brain children of the giants—the D.D.'s, Ph.D.'s, Litt.D.'s, and D.H.L.'s—presumably the gaudiest blooms in our homiletics garden. From them we would expect those fine shadings of taste, discrimination and erudition for which the rest of us strive. Unfortunately, what we get is overworked Browning, the riper gobs of Tennyson and a soggy procession of lesser lights ranging downward from Whittier and Lowell to Edgar A. Guest. It is the selection a schoolboy might make with class time approaching and a maiden aunt's volume of "Favorite Poems" close at hand.

Poetry for Illumination

It is true that certain poets (poets of serious wit and symbolism, the textbooks call them) are at the moment very much in vogue, but the plea for the better use of better poetry is not just a matter of taste, a current literary fad to which the preacher must conform to be in style. Rather, it is a question of whether he wishes to use poetry to illuminate his message, or whether he is simply relieving the monotony of his delivery with innocuous little rhymed surprises sprinkled helter-skelter through his sermon like raisins in a rice pudding.

Without ascribing motives, it is enough to say that one third of our anthologized preachers have quoted verse, and almost without exception it is trash and trifles. Out of the treasury of great poetry from Homer to the present they have made their selections, and the results make one blush for our ministry. The great Greeks—Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Aristophanes and many more—are ignored, and only two brief lines from Euripides are quoted. The Latin poets fare no better. There are two lines from Virgil and that is all. Dante, the poet of heaven, hell and the heart of God, is passed over as are all the writers of the Middle Ages, including Chaucer. There is but little more appreciation of the giants of the Renaissance and Reformation. Shakespeare, of course, is quoted and, in one instance, Donne; but Milton, incredibly, is passed by with a single reference.

Sins of Omission

So down through the literary periods our ministers' sins of omission are compounded. The ethical Pope and the mystical Blake find no place in their sermons. They are not concerned with Wordsworth or Coleridge, Shelley or Keats. Of all the Victorians, they recognize only Tennyson and Browning. The obvious from Whittier, Longfellow and Bryant are quoted, there is one bit of Whitman, but with these exceptions the American poets of the 19th century fare no better. Approaching more modern times, our preachers miss the amazing sermonic inspiration offered by Hardy, Hopkins, Thompson, Housman, Masefield, Yeats, Frost, Sandburg, Robinson and Jeffers, to mention only a few.

Of our contemporary poets, who, as seldom before, are concerned with the spiritual and theological, only T. S. Eliot finds a place. If these representative divines ever heard of John Crowe Ransome, Allen Tate, Delmore Schwartz, Wallace Stevens, W. H. Auden, Ezra Pound, Marianne Moore, Dylan Thomas, Stephen Spender or Archibald MacLeish, all of whom are wrestling with the spiritual dilemma of man, they give no hint in their selections. As far as they are concerned, such prophetic voices remain silent.

So much for the sins of omission; the sins of commission are not less grave. But at the risk of being offensive, let us be specific. Take, for example, the case of Preacher X, a man with string of letters after his name like t tail of a comet, representing degre both earned and honorary, which or make his illiteracy the greater tragec

Wine or Soda Pop?

When this learned divine writes sermon he includes in it, as a man letters might, selections of poetry. I deed, in one sermon he quotes no le than eighty-five lines of verse. O might expect, therefore, to hear t organ music of the great poets livi and dead who have enriched mankir Instead, one is treated to the hurd gurdy tunes of versifiers no literate pe son would dignify with the name poet. The single exception is a quot tion from Vachel Lindsey, a compete singer of second rate songs.

It does not greatly matter th Preacher X has quoted the verse has; a sermon need not be illumined literary masterpieces. The real trage is that the preacher apparently do not know that the cup he is offering is not vintage wine but soda pop. I deed, in presenting his lengthy quot tion, one from the pen of Ethel Arno Tilden, he goes so far as to state th Mrs. Tilden's poetry is "her credenti opening the doors to the hall of fam and her "passport to immortality." is not Mrs. Tilden's fault that she no poet. It is Preacher X's fault that thinks she is.

Ubiquitous Kipling

We turn from Preacher X to Dr. another distinguished religious leade Like Preacher X, Dr. Y is given to qu tation, and again like Preacher X he h shown the literary discrimination of high school sophomore. One could fo give him for quoting Kipling, but the is less justification for selecting "T Recessional" which, while it may not bad, has surely become banal. Kiplin however, is the high point in Dr. Y literary allusions. (One is tempted say "literary illusions.") From ti relative Parnassus, he toboggans "God Bless America" and not conte to rest there descends to the nadir literary nonenity with Edgar Gue You cannot go lower than that. But be quite fair, Dr. Y does lift himself bit toward the close of his discourse quoting the verse of G. Ashton Oldha which while ordinary is not odorous.

RUSSEL CARTWRIGHT STROUP *has been pastor since 1950 of Georgetown Presbyterian Church, Washington, D. C., founded in 1780. He has also served pastorates in California and Virginia. He was decorated three times for rescuing men under fire while serving as a chaplain in the Pacific during World War II.*

America first, not only in things
material,
But in things of the spirit.
Not merely in science, invention,
motors, skyscrapers,
But also in ideals, principles,
character.[1]

t deathless lines, surely, but a heap
learning higher than Edgar Guest.
If the kind reader can endure one
re example let us consider the work
the Reverend Doctor Z, a man of
cognized erudition. From such a one
might expect "the best that has been
d and thought in the world," par-
ularly when the sermon from which
quote was delivered at a baccalau-
ate service and had for its subject
he Seven Pillars of Wisdom." Such
might expect but what do we find?
Dr. Z begins encouragingly enough
th a reference to Hawthorne and fol-
vs this with a barrage of quotations
m Francis Bacon, Ben Franklin, Dr.
hnson, Abe Lincoln, Jefferson, Em-
son and Theodore Roosevelt, a mé-
ge but certainly good enough. The
ctor is catholic in his taste, giving us
m time to time a bit of Woodrow
ilson, Epictetus, A. Bronson Alcott,
rl Schurz and a gem from Henry
rd. By this time, if we are not im-
essed by his learning we should be.

Riley Expounded

So far, so so, but the preacher is not
lling to let well enough alone. He
ist venture from prose to poetry and
doing so expose the sophomore un-
r the sophist. With the hope that
ustees, administrative officers, pro-
ssors, students and alumni may
oose the highway of virtue and piety
well as of learning" he gives for their
spiration and ours, hackneyed hokum
ich must have made even the alumni
uirm. Observing that "the vicissi-
des of weather stand for the vicissi-
des of life," he urges to employ "the
ilosophy" expressed by the poet
ley":

hain't no use to grumble and com-
plain;
s just as cheap and easy to rejoice.—
hen God sorts out the weather and
sends rain,
'y rain's my choice.[2]

is gem is quickly followed by "a bit
poetry" (by William Hazlitt) which,
confesses, "he picked up in some
gitive way" but which he uses "al-
st every day."

For every evil under the sun
There is a remedy or there is none.
If there is a remedy, find it.
If there isn't, never mind it.

is, I should add in the Doctor's de-
se, he does characterize in a classic
derstatement as "hardly more than
ggerel."
Having so exposed himself, Dr. Z is
t redeemed by giving us two lines of
alt Whitman which, incidentally, he
does not confess to using "every day."
Nor does he completely rehabilitate
himself as a man of letters by quoting
a line of Virgil or capping the perora-
tion with the too, too familiar senti-
mentality of Bryant:

He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky
thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread
alone,
Will guide my steps aright.

Rather he blunts his message by never
venturing beyond the bounds of Bart-
lett's "Select Quotations" and by not
distinguishing between the meritorious
and the meretricious.

Now this is not written to pillory
these preachers who are, alas, so like
ourselves. It is written to stress the
damage done and the good left undone
by our cultural lag. We have failed,
first of all, to enrich our own minds and
the minds of our congregations from
the best world literature offers. It is as
if we ministers were to turn to Tin Pan
Alley calling upon our congregations to
sing "I Believe" or "Faith, Hope and
Charity" in preference to the high and
holy hymns of the Church, or find in
the Reader's Digest a substitute for the
Word of God. Remove from our culture
the great literature of mankind, and
how irreparable is the loss! It is the
very stuff of civilization, and if we lack
it or overlook it we are barbarians, and
our barbarism is not hid by an aca-
demic hood.

Blunting the Message

Such barbarism tends to degrade the
gospel in the minds of those who rever-
ence whatsoever things are true, lovely
or of good report. To quote Edgar
Guest to men and women of discrim-
ination is as offensive as to regale the
Ladies' Aid with a ribald story. It de-
means the message as well as the min-
ister, and can only bring religion itself
into disrepute. This is no minor matter
in times which compel us to enlist to
the cause of Christ the best minds of
men.

As a recent pronouncement of the
National Council of Churches has
stressed: "Religion has depth which art
needs lest it become tempted to esthet-
icism. Religion, on the other hand, is
expressed most profoundly through the
forms which constitute the proper con-
cern of art." If, for the sake of both art
and religion, we are to win the artist
and all men of critical intelligence and
esthetic taste, we must evidence a
knowledge of and respect for "the best
that has been said and thought in the
world." Certainly we dare not purvey
that mental pablum which only serves
to confirm the ignorant in their folly
and offend the minds grown strong on
the meat of the masters.

Finally, it is hard not to call into
question the intellectual and spiritual
qualifications of men so lacking in dis-
crimination. A spiritual leader must be
one who with sure instinct divines the
true and the false, the good from the
not quite good enough. Certainly he
will not accept the cheap, the tawdry,
the vulgar.

Consequently, if perhaps unfairly, it
becomes difficult for a congregation to
believe that one so blind to values in
one realm can discern them in another.
A spiritual sensitivity must be appar-
ent in the minister's approach to all of
life. In literature as in theology, in art
as in ethics, he must recognize the good,
the true, the beautiful and be respon-
sive to it.

If our ministerial candidates come
from backgrounds of cultural poverty,
if their exposure to the humanities in
the universities has not supplied their
need, the seminaries should seek, as
some do, to fill the void. For those now
beyond the reaches of formal education
there is still the possibility of self-edu-
cation. There are books aplenty that in-
troduce the reader to the best in litera-
ture past and present. There are even
excellent interpretations of the spir-
itual content of the works of great writ-
ers. But most of all there are the works
themselves which, if they are read with
interest and understanding, cannot fail
to provide new spiritual insights and
deeper understanding. Our greatest
need is to know, and poetry—*good*
poetry—is a sure means to that knowl-
edge.

The prayer of all of us who seek to
guide in the things of the spirit must
ever be the petition of Paul that our
love may "abound yet more and more
in knowledge and all judgment" that
we "may approve things that are excel-
lent" and so be "without offence" be-
fore Christ, who is the incarnation of
beauty and truth as he is of goodness
and love.

New Roads

(Continued from page 24)

is your philosophy of life? The way you
answer these question will have a lot
to do with the way you make your
choices in life.

Gilbert Chesterton once said that if
he were looking for a room for lodg-
ing he would not ask the landlady how
many windows the room had, or what
was the view, or how many flights of
stairs were to be climbed. Instead, his
first question would be, "Madam, what
is your view of the universe?" If the
landlady was right on that point she
would be right on everything else and
if she was wrong on that score it did
not matter how many windows the
room had.

Tonight you are standing on the
brink of a river. You are about to cross
over into a new and exciting land. You
will travel on roads you have never
traveled before. If you have any doubts
or fears as you approach this promised
land, ask yourself three questions: 1)
Am I willing to learn more about life
and my vocation? 2) Am I willing to
sacrifice my energy, time and sub-
stance to make the world a better
place to live in? 3) Do I put my trust
in God and the ultimate triumph of
his Kingdom?

[1] G. Ashton Oldham—*America First* Used by
mission.
[2] James W. Riley, *Neighborly Poems* (Indian-
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SERMONS FROM JOB

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AT ALL BOOKSTORES

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Preachers and Books

VOCABULARY OF FAITH. *By Hampton Adams. Bethany. $2.50.*

REDISCOVERING THE WORDS OF FAITH. *By Charles T. Sardeson. Abingdon. $2.00.*

CHRISTIAN WORDS AND CHRISTIAN MEANINGS. *By John Burnaby. Harper. $2.50.*

A NEW TESTAMENT WORDBOOK. *By William Barclay. Harpers. $2.50.*

Caveat Emptor! These books do not vary too much in size or price, but there the similarity ends. The first two books are actually books of sermons on some of the great words of the Christian faith, such as revelation, atonement, faith, the kingdom of God, grace, redemption.

Vocabulary of Faith is the better of the two. Adams writes for the layman, and by and large does a commendable job. His book is certainly non-technical, and he uses illustrations profusely to make his points clear. This reviewer's feeling, however, is that the average layman may know more, and want to know more, than the minister gives him credit for. I think that any layman who reads religious books might possibly enjoy a book that goes deeper than this, and that would give him the vocabulary of faith technically more profound. Put this book in the homiletical section of your library, not with your commentaries and technical books. If you are looking for some book to help you get started on a series of sermons on the "Great Words of the Christian Faith," this might be helpful. It has a bibliography, but no index.

Rediscovering the Words of Faith covers, in general, the same Christian vocabulary as *Vocabulary of Faith,* but it does not do it as well. There are few definitions which the author gives, though he quotes excellent definitions from time to time. He depends upon the total impact of a chapter, rather than a carefully worked-out plan to explain the technical words of Christianity. Adam's book, *Vocabulary of Faith,* could possibly be used as a study book; Sardeson's book could not. It has a homiletic thrust, with a tendency to be wordy and is not always clear. Even the chapter headings are obtuse. The chapter on *revelation* is not so entitled. It is called instead, "It Begins With God." In like manner, a chapter titled, "The Weight Is On Him," means *atonement;* "Sustained From Day To Day," *sacraments;* "Saints Around The Cross," *the Church.* And so it goes. Fortunately the table of contents explains what the chapter headings mean. Unfortunately, there is no index.

Burnaby's book, *Christian Words and Christian Meanings,* was also written for laymen as well as ministers, but it has a higher view of the intellect of the layman than do the first two. The point of view of the author is an interesting one: he is conconcerned not so much with giving definitions of our great Christian words as with giving them their distinctive Christian connotations. In the introduction he says: ". . . Christianity can never substitute another language for its own simply because there can never be a substitute for Holy Scripture. No translation of the Bible into 'modern speech' can modernise the thought of the biblical writers; and that thought is not after all much more alien to the de-Christianized world of today than it was to the Graeco-Roman world of the first three centuries after Christ."

The book shows high literary skill. It is profuse with illustrations, packed with literary allusions and quotations, and, best of all, shows a profound theological insight. You may not agree with all of the author's observations and ideas, but he is a persuasive writer who makes disagreement interesting. The book would make an excellent source for a sermon series on Christian words, or, better yet, on basic theological beliefs. There is a good index which adds to the worth of a worthwhile book. Put this book in the theological section of your library.

The fourth book, *A New Testament Wordbook,* began as a series of articles in the *British Weekly* on New Testament Greek Words. These newspaper articles were an attempt to popularize the Greek dictionary, and, as Barclay says, "to teach Greek to people who do not know any Greek."

William Barclay is professor of New Testament in Trinity College, University of Glasgow, and if this book is any indication, he is an excellent teacher. He writes as one who loves words, especially New Testament Greek words, for he makes them live.

In this little book he examines briefly about forty Greek words. Take two examples. "Verily, I say unto you (says Jesus), they *have their reward.*" The root word in Greek for *have their reward* is *apechein.* It means "paid in full;" or, "to receipt an account as paid up." Barclay then draws from Greek sources, both in and out of the New Testament, to illustrate his points. "So what Jesus is saying is that those who give alms and pray and fast in such a way that they deliberately seek the ad

ration of men, receive the admiration men—*and that is all.* The admiran of men is their payment in full." Or, the famous technical New Testaent term: *parousia.* Barclay first ows that it is the technical Christian m for the second coming of Christ. e then points out that in the papyri d in hellenistic Greek it is the techcal term for the arrival of the emror or king. A new era in the provces would be dated from the arrival the emperor; new coins would be uck to commemorate the visit. It was occasion when petitions were preted, wrongs righted, and judgments ade. It was a visitation which corted and healed. With the background this meaning of the term, it is easy see what a picture the word *parousia* ould convey to the early Christian urch.

Certainly, the book is limited in that gives only a few of the hundreds of ew Testament Greek words, but it akes the minister realize how much needs really to *study* his Bible, and shows how enticing such study can . It proves, too, that good scholarship ould make good preaching. It makes u blow the dust off your Greek lexin, and sends you thumbing through wistfully wondering why you did not a beter job in Greek I and II in semary.

All the Greek words in this book are ansliterated, with notes on their pronciation. (Thus, no matter how uch of our Greek we have forgotten, e can still edge a Greek word into a rmon and pronounce it correctly). here is a fine bibliography—worth the ice of the book—if you like this kind study and this kind of basic preachg.—*Gerald R. Johnson, Westminster resbyterian, Toledo, O.*

HE ESSENCE OF CHRISTIANITY. *By Ludwig Feuerbach. Harper Torchbooks, 339 pages, $1.45.*

WHAT hath God wrought in the development of paper-back books! xpect the unexpected among them and will appear. Now Feuerbach for popar distribution! It seems that the sence of Feuerbach, which appears in is book is out place in the torchlit mpany of Underhill, Niebuhr, Goodeed, Kierkegaard and others in this ries. Yet this mid-nineteenth century ice of materialism, of anti-theological eology deserves a new hearing.

Not only did he influence present-day ought (Buber, Berdyaev, Fromm); he ll represents the ultimate in manntered religion. One can never again th easy conscience advocate a religion *partial* immanence after following euerbach to the ultimate point. Alough he was a member of the wreckg-crew, his work often made a positive ntribution to later theology in the me way Hume's ultimate scepticism d in philosophy. Incidentally, H. ichard Niebuhr and Karl Barth, with reword and introduction, set up this rthwhile triple-play. — *Martin E. arty.*

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A THEOLOGY FOR CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP. *By T. A. Kantonen. Muhlenberg Press, $2.00.*

GIVING AND GROWING. *By Margaret F. Donaldson. Revell. $2.50.*

At a time when stewardship is having a rebirth of emphasis these two volumes will be welcomed and valued by parish workers. Dr. Kantonen in *A Theology for Christian Stewardship* reconstructs the easily forgotten inner framework which must support Christian stewardship. In chapters on "The Word of God," the "Nature of God," "Christ," "The Holy Spirit," "Justification of Faith," "The Priesthood of Believers" and "Christian Hope" the writer affirms that God himself lays claim to man's whole life, appealing for his supreme loyalty and response through stewardship. This author is thoroughly versed in Reformation theology and he presents his case with clarity, vigor and enthusiasm.

Miss Donaldson's *Giving and Growing* is an excellent book on methods of finance and public relations for the local church. It will remind ministers and other readers that success in a church, as elsewhere, is a lot of little things. For example, alert theaters don't advertise a show after it is over; yet a large percentage of churches are too inert to pull their public bulletin notices until well into the middle of the following week.

This book suggests how through outward appearance, personality and character, the best possible public relations can be established between the local church and her community. If financial methods seem worn out and anemic Miss Anderson has gathered plenty of fresh plasma to give the local workers a transfusion of new ideas and enthusiasm for the ever-recurring every member canvass.—*Clarence E. Showalter, Austin Westminster Presbyterian, Chicago, Ill.*

THE TIMELESS GOSPEL. *By Harold Cooke Phillips. Abingdon. $2.50.*

This is a book of stimulating sermons dealing with vital issues of our day. It takes its title from the first three sermons, in which an attempt is made to clarify the uniqueness of Jesus and the timelessness of his gospel—an effort by no means easy. It is to Dr. Phillip's credit that he has done well. His argument is clear, logical and concise, his use of language well-nigh classic. However, by the quotations he uses, he somewhat dates himself and his thinking. There are references to Charles E. Jefferson, Richard Roberts, Hugh Mackintosh, and scholars Wellhausen and Klausner—bywords to the theological students of the past generation—but no mention is made of Barth, Brunner and Buber, or other contemporaries of stature.

Dr. Phillips is also effective in those sermons which reflect his contact with the problems of urban America. Fo more than a quarter of a century, h has felt the changing pulse of the inne city, but here, too, he leans heavil upon the social gospel as interpreted b Washington Gladden and Walte Rauschenbusch in his research for solution to the problems of urbaniza tion.

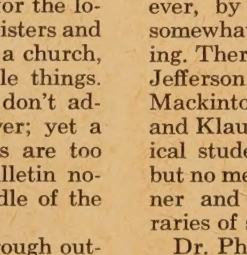
In other sermons, Dr. Phillips deal forcefully with the task of the Churc today and answers those glib detractor who say that the gospel is idealistic an impractical. Many a preacher will fin this volume helpful in sermon prepara tion and an inspiration in general.— *I. George Nace, Department of Hom Missions, National Council of Churches*

A LIVING FAITH FOR TODAY. *By Ernes Gordon. Coward-McCann, Inc. $3.75*

Mr. Gordon, dean of the Princeto University Chapel, here offers a grab bag of twenty-seven sermons. The bear witness to a sturdy faith urgentl stated and doctrinally sound. But while the author's gospel is grand, his ser mons are somehow less than successful They lack the salt of imagination. Or, i it that the author describes the Faith but does not permit its immediate im pact to come upon us? Perhaps it is style which, like political oratory, use many modifiers and much studied repe tition. And, can a preacher, even a Princeton, get away with a word like "troglodyte" in a sermon; or should he get away with a phrase like "the gospe is the real McCoy" anywhere? There are less than a dozen telling illustra tions in the more than two hundred fifty pages; and while illustrations ca never compensate for content, they help when content is thinly troweled A few of the sermons do speak elo quently of what Dean Gordon often calls "the blessed gospel of our Beloved God," notably one entitled "The Crucifixion Makes Sense." The first sermon is titled "Fod God's Sake, Say Something" and the author, for God's sake has said something; but not, I fear memorably.—*David G. Buttrick, First Presbyterian, Fredonia, N. Y.*

THE PROTESTANT CHURCHES OF AMERICA. *By John Hardon, S.J. Newman 365 pages, $5.00.*

ROMAN Catholic historians since Bossuet have delighted in burlesquing Protestantism by stressing its unfortunate propensity to divide. Catholic works on American religion usually offer extensive catalogs of denominations as a contrast to their one and holy institution. Hardon happily departs from tradition by spending 285 pages on the fifteen bodies that make up ninety per cent of American Protestantism and only thirty pages on the dozens that make up the other ten per cent. He cannot, however, resist the temptation to elaborate on the more esoteric bodies (Mormons, Christian Scientists, etc.), and to be least charitable to the denominations that deviate least from "catholic" Christianity.



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Written for Catholics, this book is avesdropworthy to help Protestants ee themselves as they are seen. Three nes of stress in particular struck me. ne is the difficulty a Jesuit has under- anding Protestant discussions of bases or ecumenical endeavor. Second is his mpression of the extent of liturgical evival among non-Catholics. Most im- ortant is the underlying perplexity of ne author as he confronts the univer- l appeal of differing Protestants to ne and the same authority, the Bible. ome to think of it, that is the endur- g theological problem of what Dean erald Brauer calls American Protes- ntism's "enduring biblicism."

Statistics in the appendix are con- enient and up-to-date. Hardon's prob- m of sources is the problem of anging Protestantism. Some of the uthoritative works of a quarter-cen- ıry ago are, we might say fortunately, o longer representative of the denom- ıations today. He can hardly help ıat.—*M.E.M.*

ESUS' BELIEF IN MAN. *By Edwin McNeill Poteat. Abingdon. $2.50.*

Jesus' Belief in Man by the late Dr. dwin McNeill Poteat, is a study, from biblical basis, of Jesus' understanding f human nature. It is important to ave a credible doctrine of man and, n the whole, this theme has been neg- cted by competent theologians. Much f the current thinking about human ature has been corrupted by both the olitical left and the theological right. r. Poteat surveys the heart of the ood news, with special attention given the temptations, the Sermon on the Iount, the parables of the kingdom, and the first and great commandment, in an effort to distill from them what may be regarded as Jesus' formulation of a doctrine of man.

The biblical doctrine of man certainly needs to be restated in an age when cynicism and pessimism have soured and shadowed it. Yet, this is not the time for frothy hilarity about how nice we are, nor by the same token is it the time to think of man as a worm of the dust. Dr. Poteat is not blind to man's sin. Neither does he regard him as doomed. Therefore, he is able to give us a well-balanced estimate of man. The author's concern is not to find a middle ground but to rediscover the biblical teaching about man's ability to choose between evil and good.

It would seem that the central idea of this book is: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself . . . We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." It is at once the doom and glory of man to have been made for fellowship with God. It is his doom, because he can never wholly escape the limitations of his nature. It is his glory, for it opens before men endless possibilities of spiritual achievement. Therefore, man is a creature of tension. In Christ God reconciled the world unto himself. Paradoxically here is our enslavement and our freedom that sets us free.

The value of this book is in its lucid and readable summary of the New Testament's emphasis on the important question of Jesus' belief in man.—*Ray Freeman Jenney, Bryn Mawr Community, Chicago, Ill.*

Pulpit Calendar

June 2—Sunday after Ascension Day.
June 9—Whitsunday (Pentecost). Children's Day.
June 16—Trinity Sunday.
June 23—2nd Sunday after Pentecost.
June 30—Independence Sunday. Nature Sunday.
July 4—Independence Day.
July 7—4th Sunday after Pentecost.
July 14—5th Sunday after Pentecost.
July 21—6th Sunday after Pentecost.
July 27—7th Sunday after Pentecost.
August 4—8th Sunday after Pentecost.
August 6—The Transfiguration.
August 11—9th Sunday after Pentecost.
August 18—10th Sunday after Pentecost.
August 25—Festival of Christ the King, and 11th Sunday after Pentecost.

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